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THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
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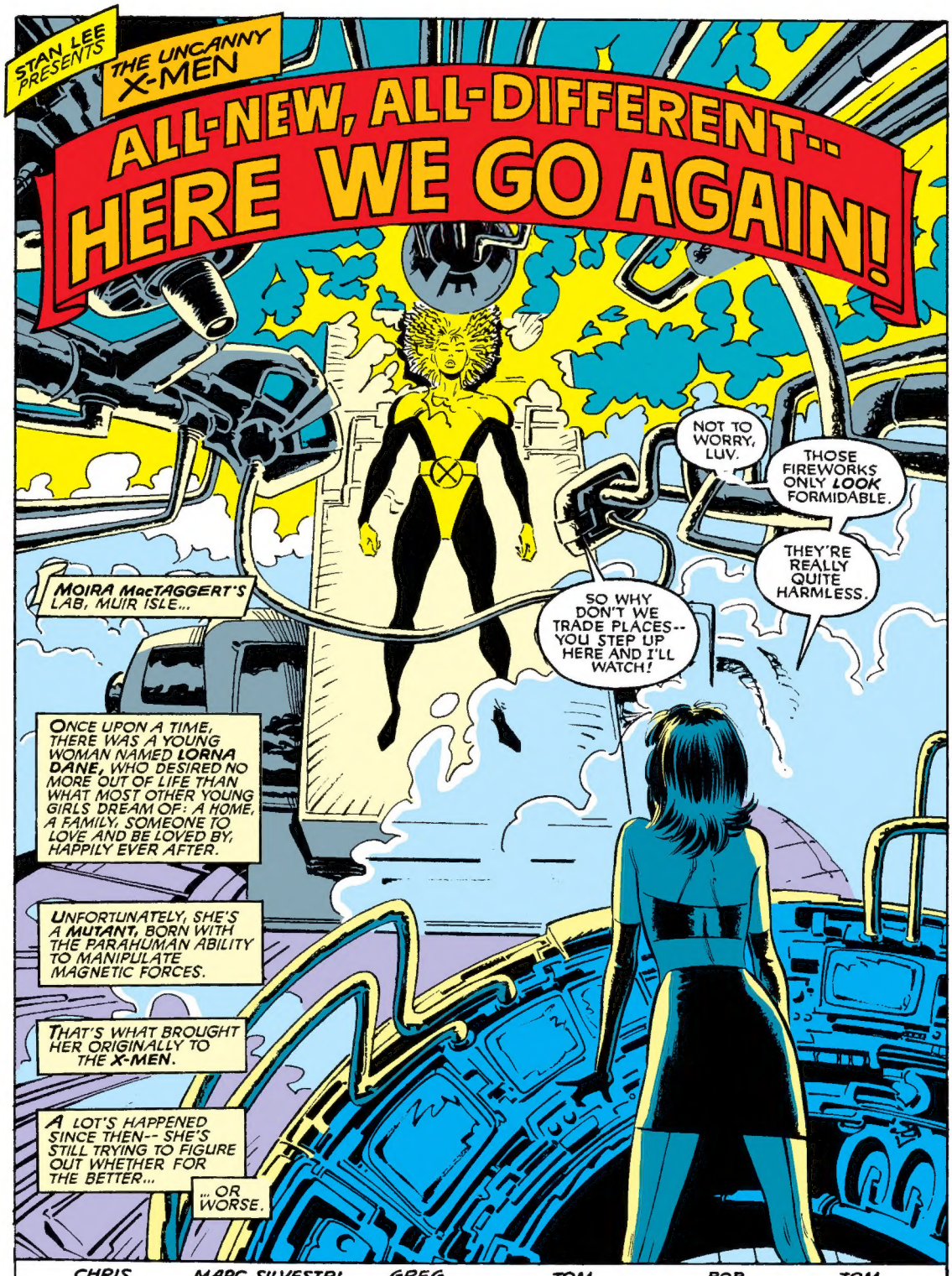
254
EARLY DEC
02461
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
TO SAVE THE DREAM--
A NEW LEGEND IS BORN!



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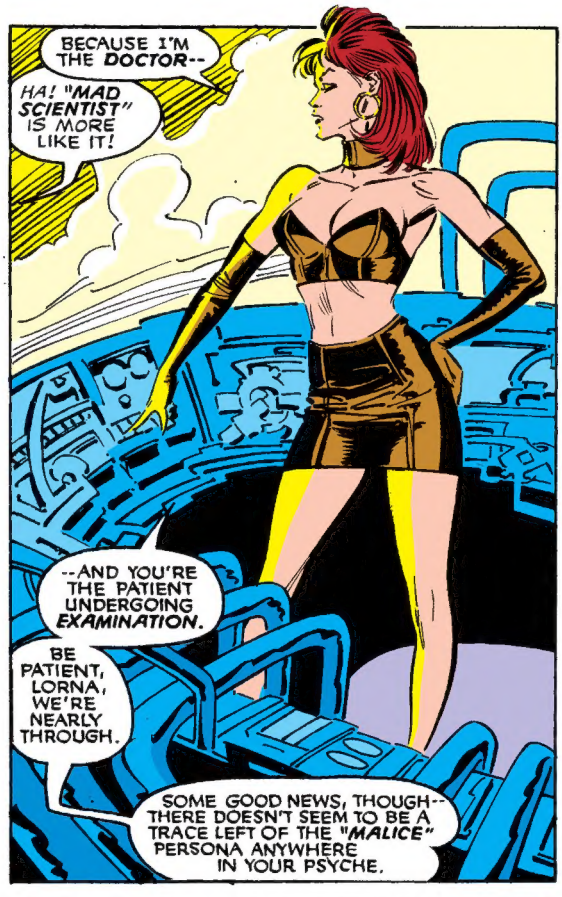
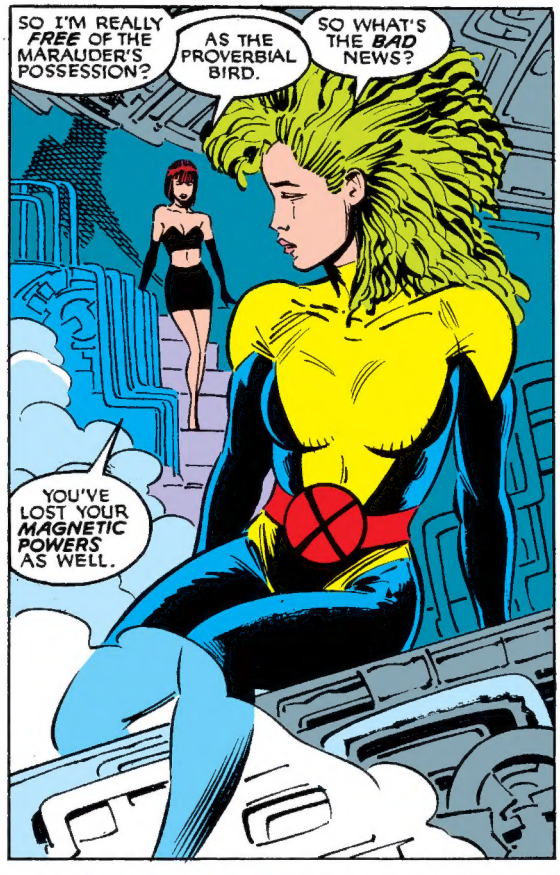
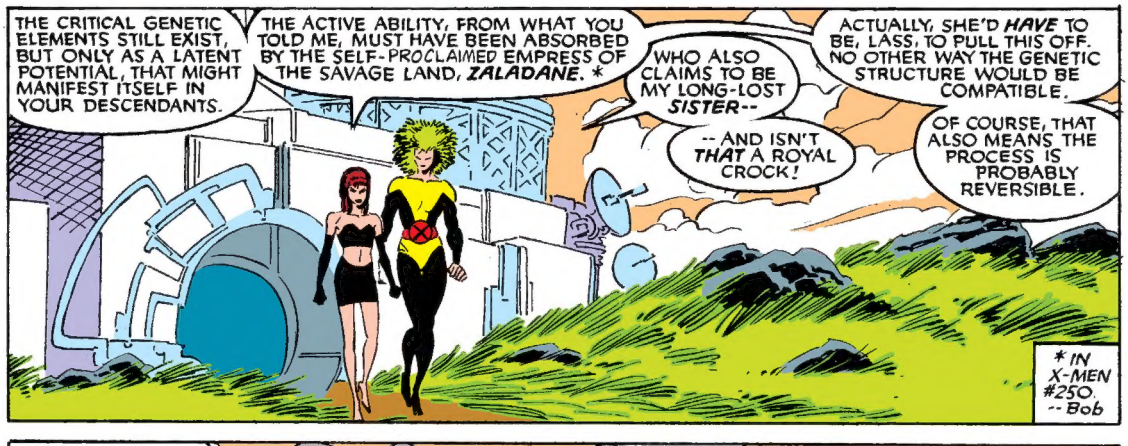
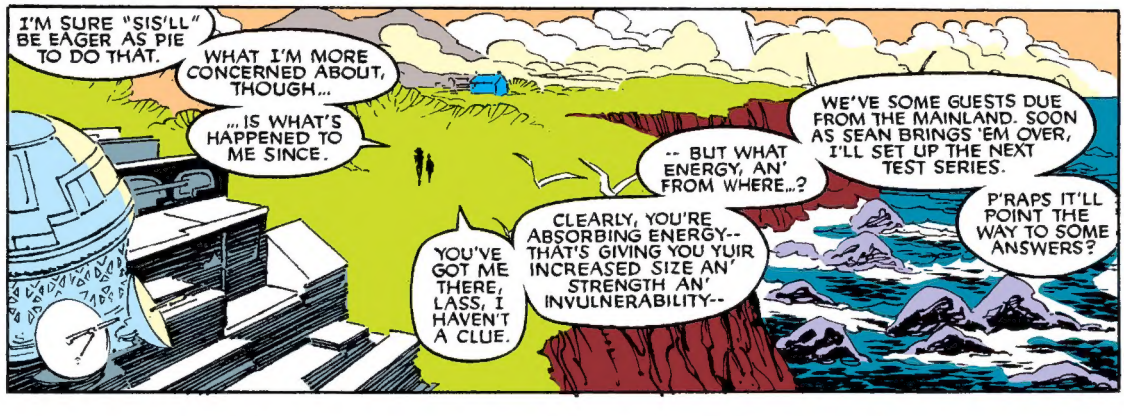
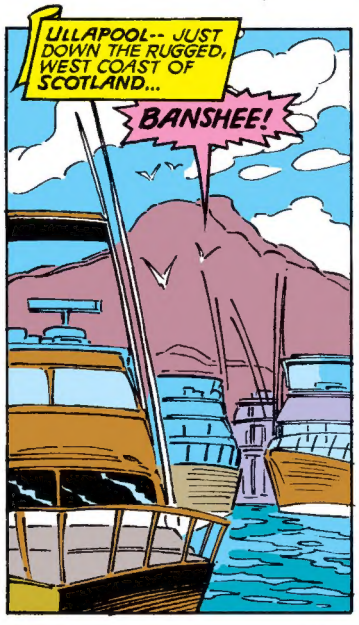
THE UNCANNY X-MEN™ Vol. 1, No. 254, Early December, 1989. (ISSN 0274-5372) Published by MARVEL COMICS, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.** Published monthly except fortnightly June, July, and August. Copyright © 1989 by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rate $12.00 for 12 issues. Canada and foreign, $14.00. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. THE UNCANNY X-MEN (including all prominent characters featured in the issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof), are trademarks of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.**

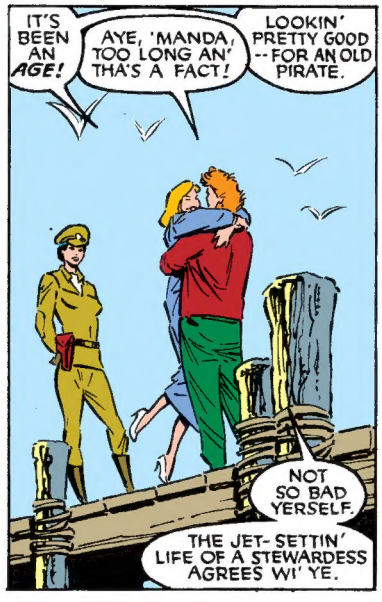

BECAUSE I'M THE DOCTOR--
HA! "MAD SCIENTIST" IS MORE LIKE IT!
--AND YOU'RE THE PATIENT UNDERGOING EXAMINATION.
BE PATIENT, LORNA, WE'RE NEARLY THROUGH.
SOME GOOD NEWS, THOUGH--THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A TRACE LEFT OF THE "MALICE" PERSONA ANYWHERE IN YOUR PSYCHE.


SO I'M REALLY FREE OF THE MARAUDER'S POSSESSION?
AS THE PROVERBIAL BIRD.
SO WHAT'S THE BAD NEWS?
YOU'VE LOST YOUR MAGNETIC POWERS AS WELL.

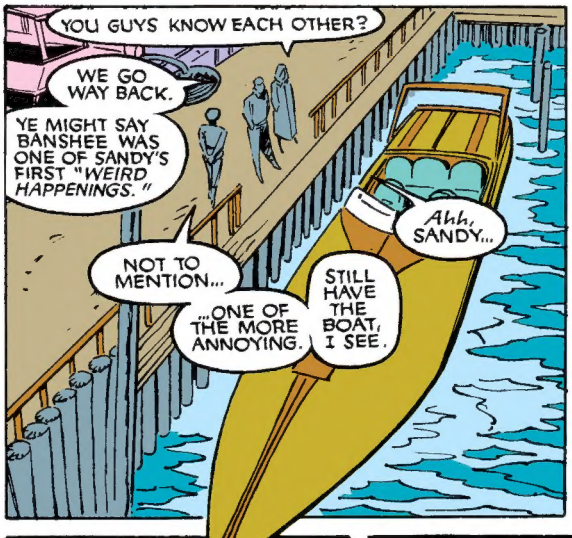

THE CRITICAL GENETIC ELEMENTS STILL EXIST, BUT ONLY AS A LATENT POTENTIAL, THAT MIGHT MANIFEST ITSELF IN YOUR DESCENDANTS.
THE ACTIVE ABILITY, FROM WHAT YOU TOLD ME, MUST HAVE BEEN ABSORBED BY THE SELF-PROCLAIMED EMPRESS OF THE SAVAGE LAND, ZALADANE. *
WHO ALSO CLAIMS TO BE MY LONG-LOST SISTER--
-- AND ISN'T THAT A ROYAL CROCK!
ACTUALLY, SHE'D HAVE TO BE, LASS, TO PULL THIS OFF. NO OTHER WAY THE GENETIC STRUCTURE WOULD BE COMPATIBLE.
OF COURSE, THAT ALSO MEANS THE PROCESS IS PROBABLY REVERSIBLE.
* IN X-MEN #250. -- Bob

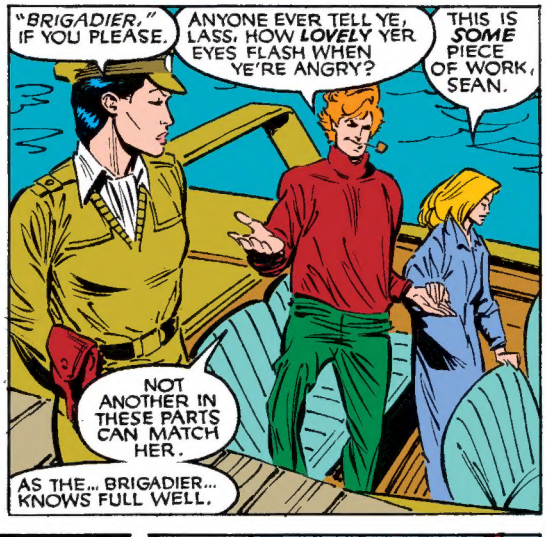

I'M SURE "SIS'LL" BE EAGER AS PIE TO DO THAT.
WHAT I'M MORE CONCERNED ABOUT, THOUGH...
...IS WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME SINCE.
YOU'VE GOT ME THERE, LASS, I HAVEN'T A CLUE.
CLEARLY, YOU'RE ABSORBING ENERGY--THAT'S GIVING YOU YUIR INCREASED SIZE AN' STRENGTH AN' INVULNERABILITY--
-- BUT WHAT ENERGY, AN' FROM WHERE...?
WE'VE SOME GUESTS DUE FROM THE MAINLAND. SOON AS SEAN BRINGS 'EM OVER, I'LL SET UP THE NEXT TEST SERIES.
P'RAPS IT'LL POINT THE WAY TO SOME ANSWERS?

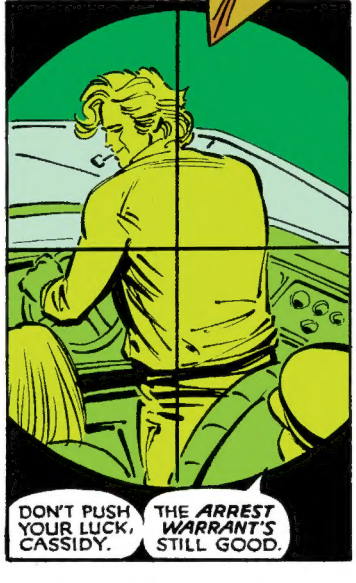

ULLAPOOL-- JUST DOWN THE RUGGED, WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND...
BANSHEE!

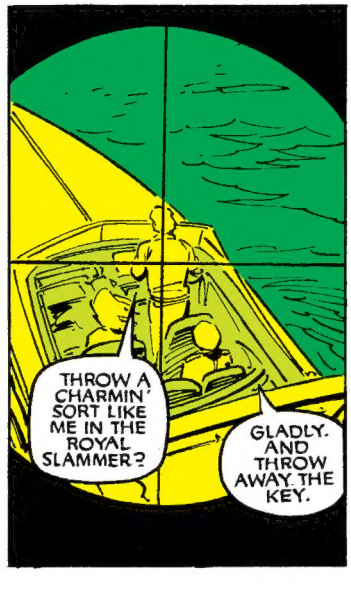

IT'S BEEN AN AGE!
AYE, 'MANDA, TOO LONG AN' THA'S A FACT!
LOOKIN' PRETTY GOOD --FOR AN OLD PIRATE.
NOT SO BAD YERSELF.
THE JET-SETTIN' LIFE OF A STEWARDESS AGREES WI' YE.

PLEASE! I'M A "SENIOR IN-FLIGHT PASSENGER SERVICE RELATIONS INTERFACE MANAGER."
MOST IMPRESSIVE.
SEAN CASSIDY, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE...
...BRIGADIER ALYSANDE STUART...
...COMMANDING OFFICER OF HER MAJESTY'S WEIRD HAPPENINGS ORGANIZATION.

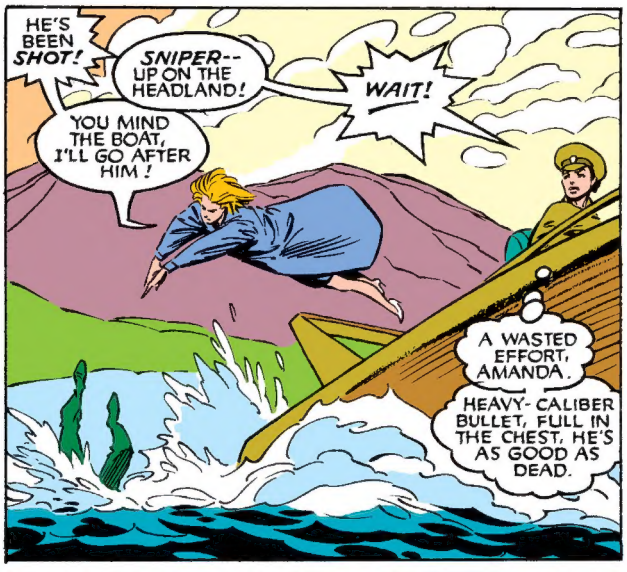

YOU GUYS KNOW EACH OTHER?
WE GO WAY BACK.
YE MIGHT SAY BANSHEE WAS ONE OF SANDY'S FIRST "WEIRD HAPPENINGS."
NOT TO MENTION...
...ONE OF THE MORE ANNOYING.
STILL HAVE THE BOAT, I SEE.
Ahh, SANDY...


"BRIGADIER," IF YOU PLEASE.
ANYONE EVER TELL YE, LASS, HOW LOVELY YER EYES FLASH WHEN YE'RE ANGRY?
THIS IS SOME PIECE OF WORK, SEAN.
NOT ANOTHER IN THESE PARTS CAN MATCH HER.
AS THE... BRIGADIER... KNOWS FULL WELL.

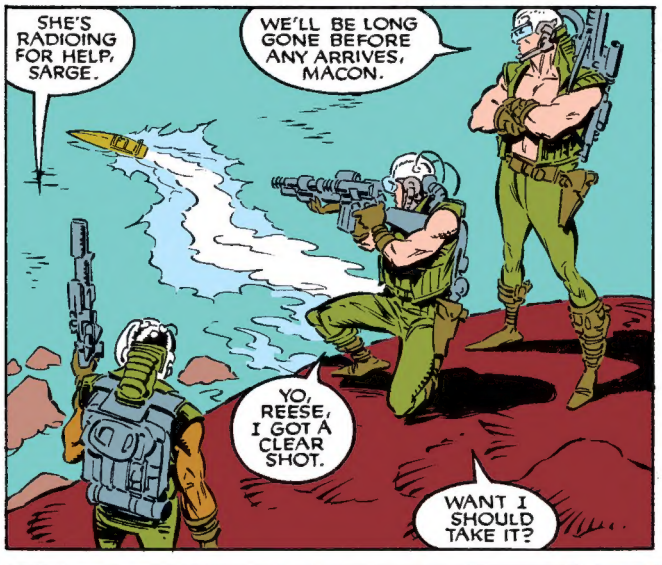

DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK, CASSIDY.
THE ARREST WARRANT'S STILL GOOD.


THROW A CHARMIN' SORT LIKE ME IN THE ROYAL SLAMMER?
GLADLY. AND THROW AWAY THE KEY.

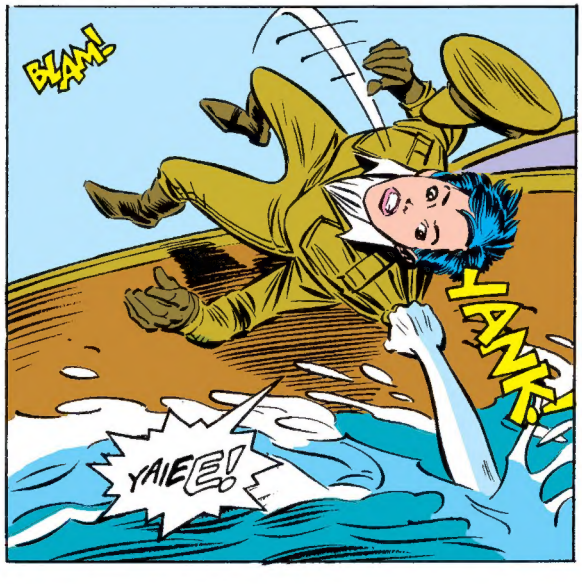
TSCHAA, SANDY-- PERISH THE THOUG
BLAM!

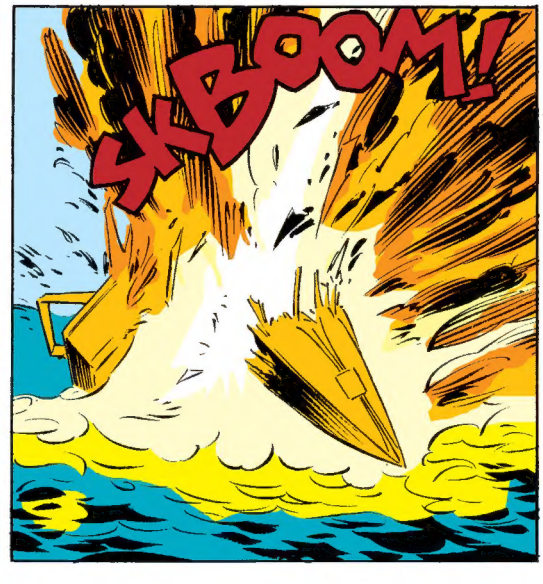

HE'S BEEN SHOT!
SNIPER-- UP ON THE HEADLAND!
WAIT!
YOU MIND THE BOAT, I'LL GO AFTER HIM!
A WASTED EFFORT, AMANDA.
HEAVY- CALIBER BULLET, FULL IN THE CHEST. HE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD.

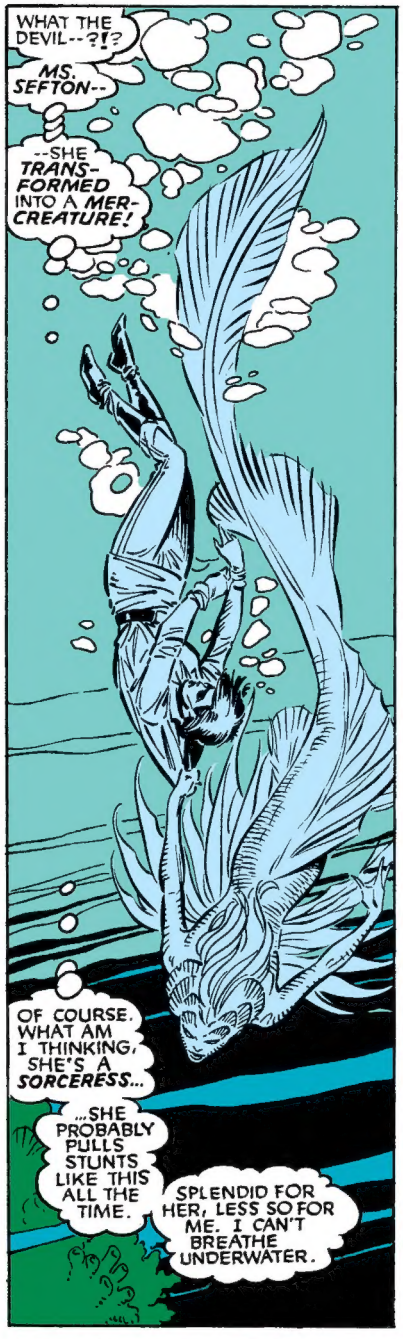
STILL-- CAN'T BLAME HER FOR TRYING
LONGBOW TO ANY STATION-- MAYDAY MAYDAY!
UNDER ATTACK, JUST OUTSIDE ULLAPOOL HARBOR.
PISTOL'S NO USE AT THIS RANGE, BOAT'S PRECIOUS LITTLE COVER--
-- BUT I CAN'T MAKE A RUN FOR IT, UNTIL AMANDA'S BACK ABOARD.

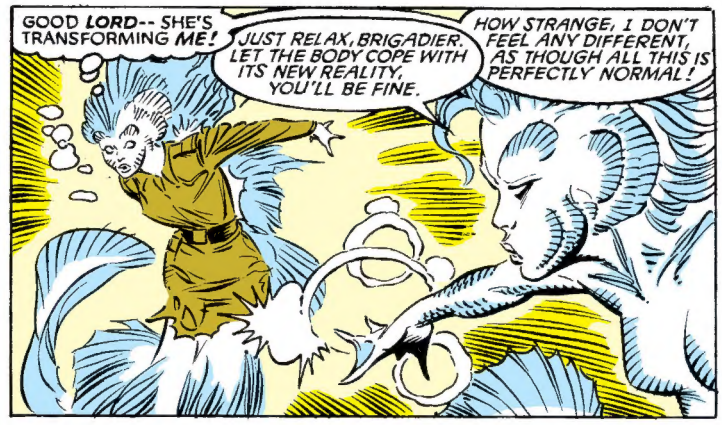

SHE'S RADIOING FOR HELP, SARGE.
WE'LL BE LONG GONE BEFORE ANY ARRIVES, MACON.
YO, REESE, I GOT A CLEAR SHOT.
WANT I SHOULD TAKE IT?

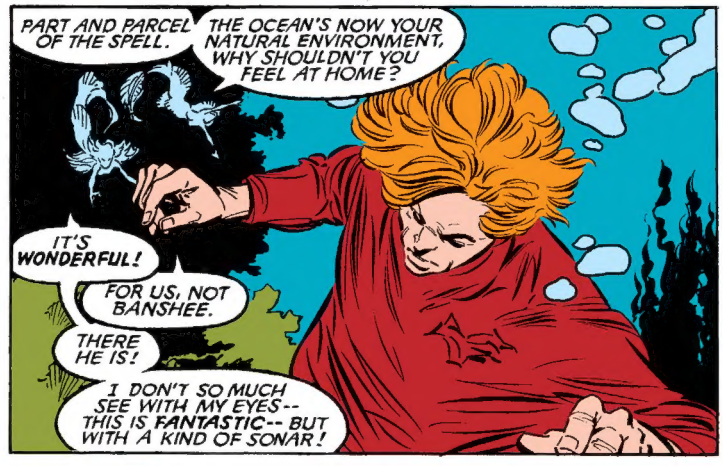
LESS LOOSE ENDS, THE BETTER, COLE.
MUSIC TO MY EARS.
SAY G'NIGHT, SWEETHEART. YOUR PARTY'S OVER!

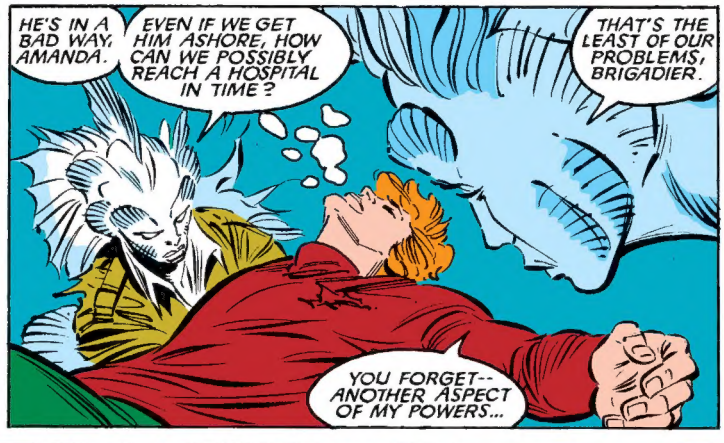

BLAM!
YAIEE!
TANK!


BOOM!

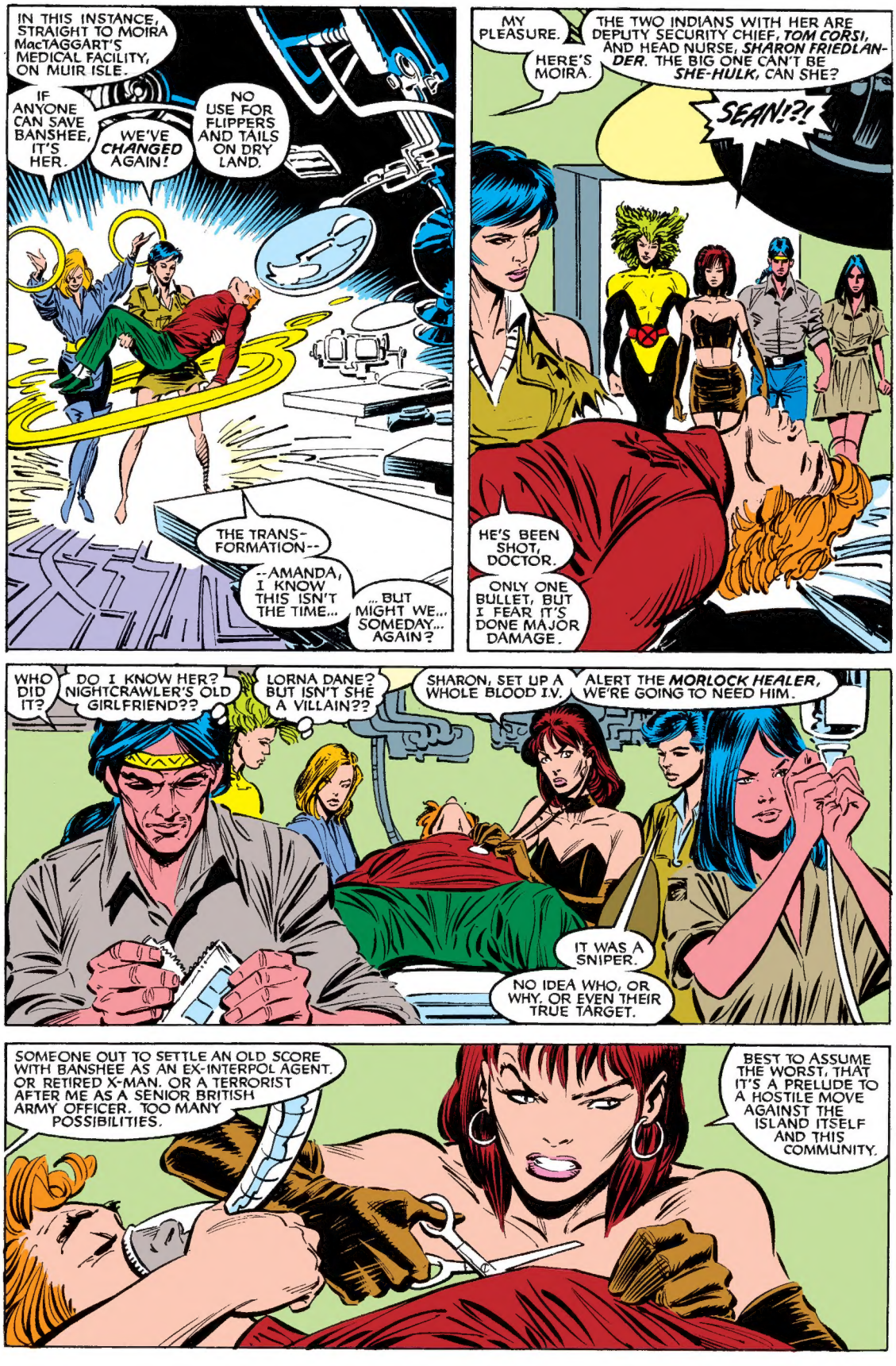

WHAT THE DEVIL--?!?
MS. SEFTON--
--SHE TRANS-FORMED INTO A MER-CREATURE!
OF COURSE. WHAT AM I THINKING, SHE'S A SORCERESS...
...SHE PROBABLY PULLS STUNTS LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME.
SPLENDID FOR HER, LESS SO FOR ME. I CAN'T BREATHE UNDERWATER.

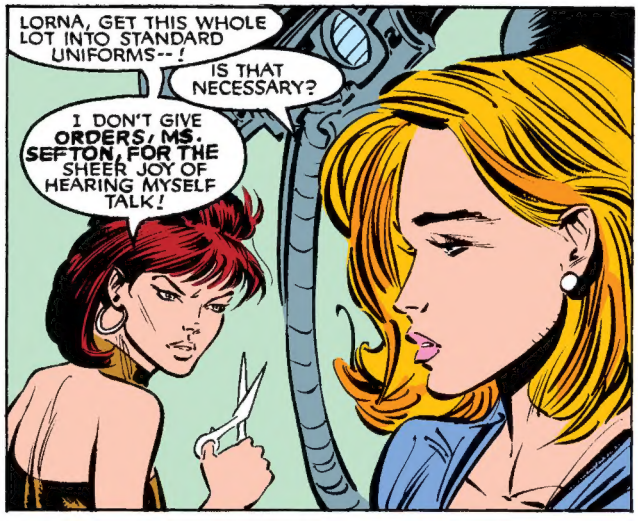

GOOD LORD-- SHE'S TRANSFORMING ME!
JUST RELAX, BRIGADIER. LET THE BODY COPE WITH ITS NEW REALITY, YOU'LL BE FINE.
HOW STRANGE, I DON'T FEEL ANY DIFFERENT, AS THOUGH ALL THIS IS PERFECTLY NORMAL!

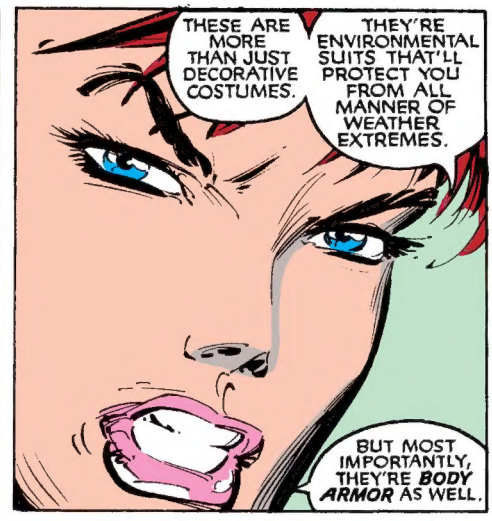

PART AND PARCEL OF THE SPELL.
THE OCEAN'S NOW YOUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, WHY SHOULDN'T YOU FEEL AT HOME?
IT'S WONDERFUL!
FOR US, NOT BANSHEE.
THERE HE IS!
I DON'T SO MUCH SEE WITH MY EYES-- THIS IS FANTASTIC-- BUT WITH A KIND OF SONAR!

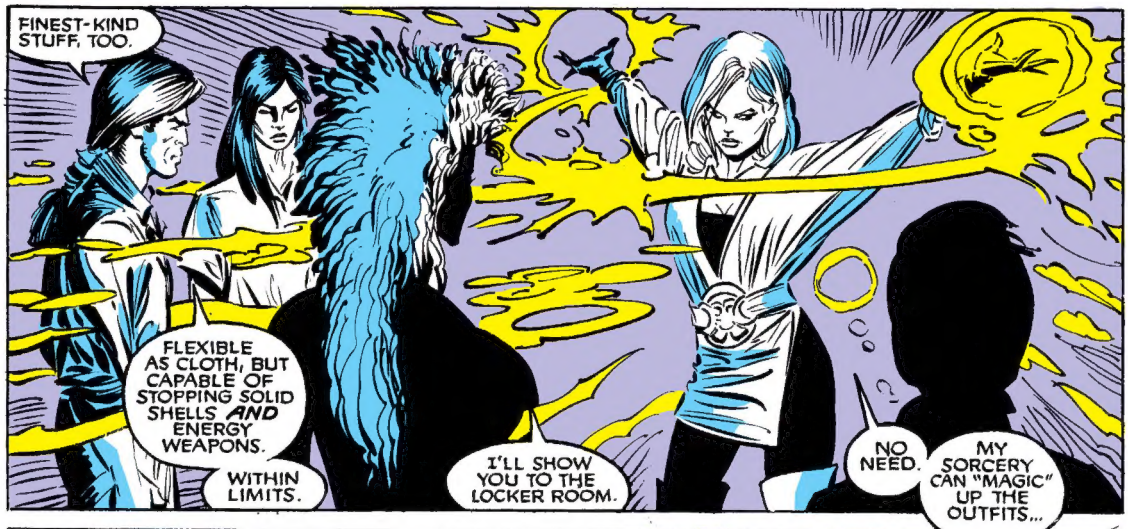

HE'S IN A BAD WAY, AMANDA.
EVEN IF WE GET HIM ASHORE, HOW CAN WE POSSIBLY REACH A HOSPITAL IN TIME?
THAT'S THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS, BRIGADIER.
YOU FORGET-- ANOTHER ASPECT OF MY POWERS...

... IS THE ABILITY TO TELEPORT.

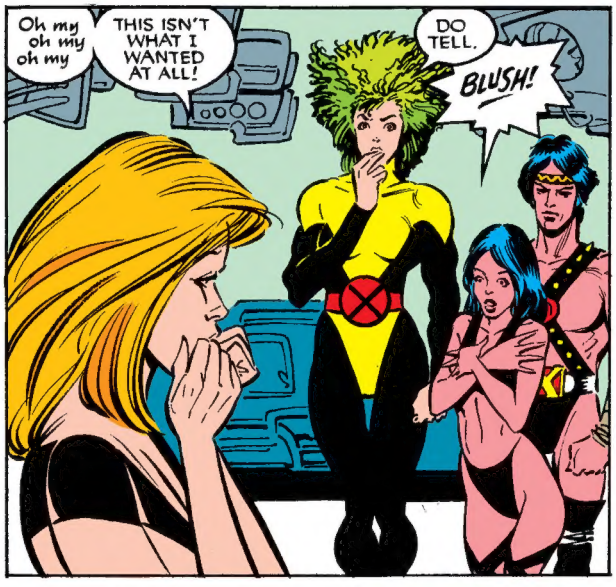

IN THIS INSTANCE, STRAIGHT TO MOIRA MacTAGGART'S MEDICAL FACILITY, ON MUIR ISLE.
IF ANYONE CAN SAVE BANSHEE, IT'S HER.
WE'VE CHANGED AGAIN!
NO USE FOR FLIPPERS AND TAILS ON DRY LAND.
THE TRANS-FORMATION--
--AMANDA, I KNOW THIS ISN'T THE TIME...
... BUT MIGHT WE... SOMEDAY... AGAIN?
MY PLEASURE.
HERE'S MOIRA.
THE TWO INDIANS WITH HER ARE DEPUTY SECURITY CHIEF, TOM CORSI, AND HEAD NURSE, SHARON FRIEDLANDER. THE BIG ONE CAN'T BE SHE-HULK, CAN SHE?
SEAN!?!
HE'S BEEN SHOT, DOCTOR.
ONLY ONE BULLET, BUT I FEAR IT'S DONE MAJOR DAMAGE.
WHO DID IT?
DO I KNOW HER? NIGHTCRAWLER'S OLD GIRLFRIEND??
LORNA DANE? BUT ISN'T SHE A VILLAIN??
SHARON, SET UP A WHOLE BLOOD I.V.
ALERT THE MORLOCK HEALER, WE'RE GOING TO NEED HIM.
IT WAS A SNIPER.
NO IDEA WHO, OR WHY, OR EVEN THEIR TRUE TARGET.
SOMEONE OUT TO SETTLE AN OLD SCORE WITH BANSHEE AS AN EX-INTERPOL AGENT. OR RETIRED X-MAN. OR A TERRORIST AFTER ME AS A SENIOR BRITISH ARMY OFFICER. TOO MANY POSSIBILITIES.
BEST TO ASSUME THE WORST, THAT IT'S A PRELUDE TO A HOSTILE MOVE AGAINST THE ISLAND ITSELF AND THIS COMMUNITY.

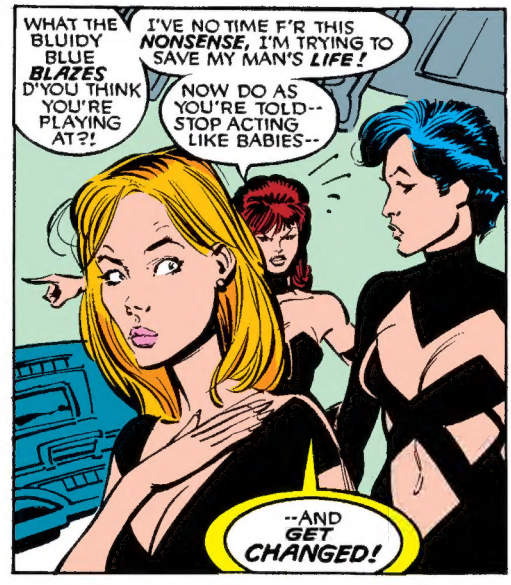

LORNA, GET THIS WHOLE LOT INTO STANDARD UNIFORMS--!
IS THAT NECESSARY?
I DON'T GIVE ORDERS, MS. SEFTON, FOR THE SHEER JOY OF HEARING MYSELF TALK!

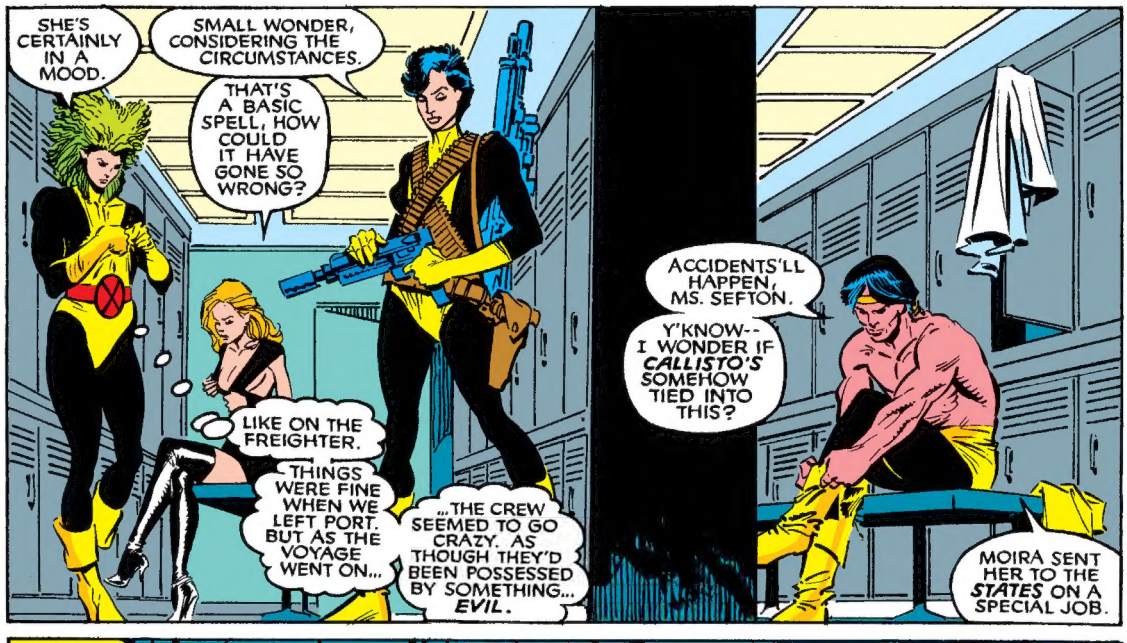

THESE ARE MORE THAN JUST DECORATIVE COSTUMES.
THEY'RE ENVIRONMENTAL SUITS THAT'LL PROTECT YOU FROM ALL MANNER OF WEATHER EXTREMES.
BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY'RE BODY ARMOR AS WELL.

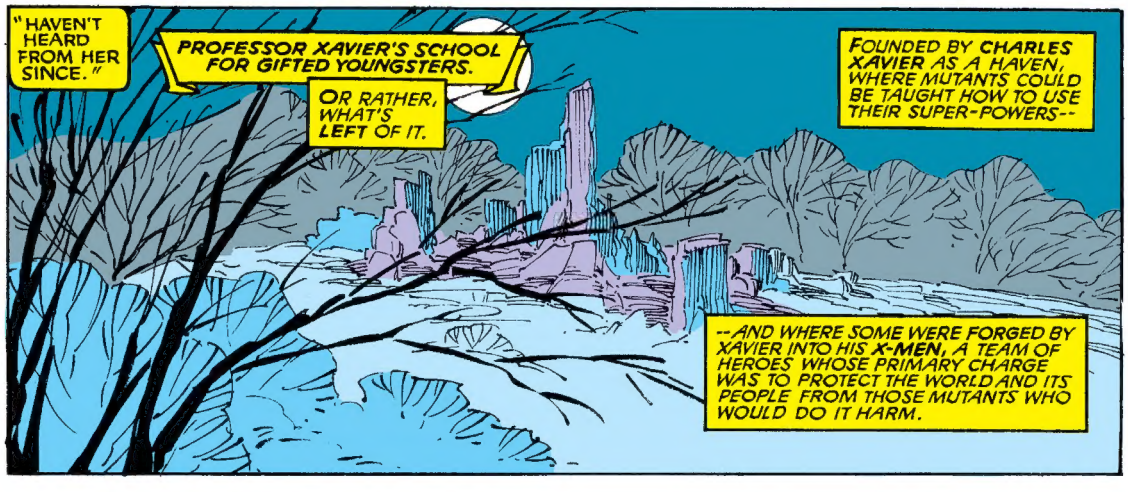

FINEST-KIND STUFF, TOO.
FLEXIBLE AS CLOTH, BUT CAPABLE OF STOPPING SOLID SHELLS AND ENERGY WEAPONS.
WITHIN LIMITS.
I'LL SHOW YOU TO THE LOCKER ROOM.
NO NEED.
MY SORCERY CAN "MAGIC" UP THE OUTFITS...

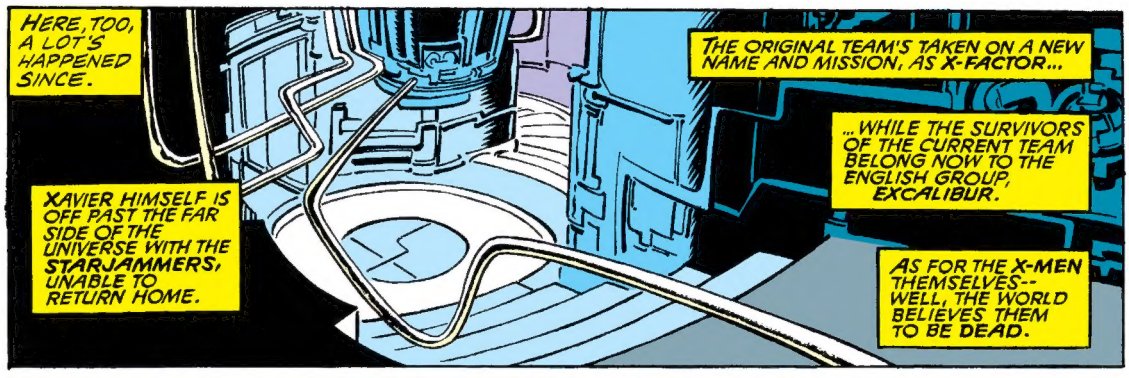
...IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.

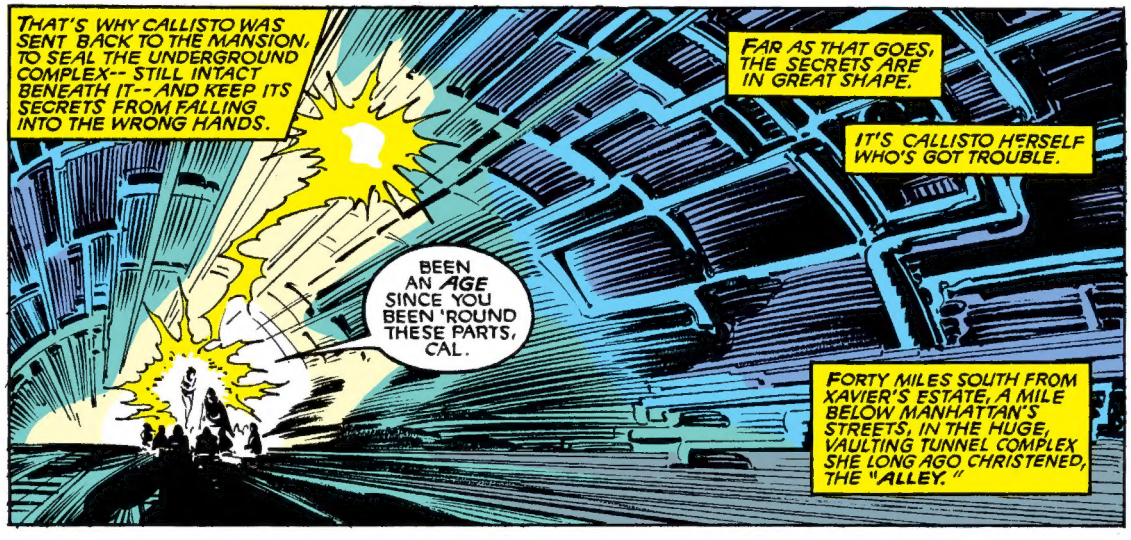

Oh my oh my oh my
THIS ISN'T WHAT I WANTED AT ALL!
DO TELL.
BLUSH!


WHAT THE BLUIDY BLUE BLAZES D'YOU THINK YOU'RE PLAYING AT?!
I'VE NO TIME F'R THIS NONSENSE, I'M TRYING TO SAVE MY MAN'S LIFE!
NOW DO AS YOU'RE TOLD-- STOP ACTING LIKE BABIES--
--AND GET CHANGED!


SHE'S CERTAINLY IN A MOOD.
SMALL WONDER, CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES.
THAT'S A BASIC SPELL, HOW COULD IT HAVE GONE SO WRONG?
LIKE ON THE FREIGHTER.
THINGS WERE FINE WHEN WE LEFT PORT. BUT AS THE VOYAGE WENT ON...
...THE CREW SEEMED TO GO CRAZY. AS THOUGH THEY'D BEEN POSSESSED BY SOMETHING... EVIL.
ACCIDENTS'LL HAPPEN, MS. SEFTON.
Y'KNOW-- I WONDER IF CALLISTO'S SOMEHOW TIED INTO THIS?
MOIRA SENT HER TO THE STATES ON A SPECIAL JOB.

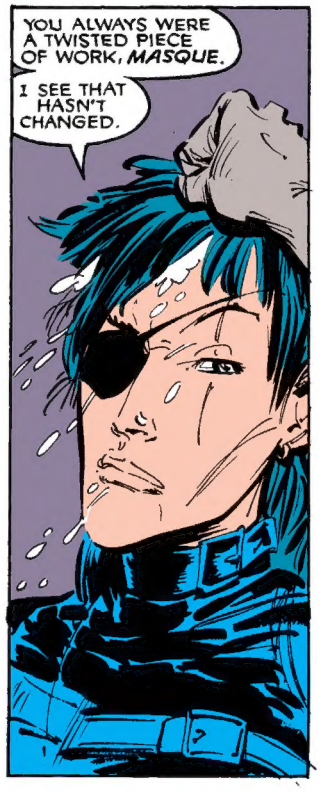

"HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER SINCE."
PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
OR RATHER, WHAT'S LEFT OF IT.
FOUNDED BY CHARLES XAVIER AS A HAVEN, WHERE MUTANTS COULD BE TAUGHT HOW TO USE THEIR SUPER-POWERS--
--AND WHERE SOME WERE FORGED BY XAVIER INTO HIS X-MEN, A TEAM OF HEROES WHOSE PRIMARY CHARGE WAS TO PROTECT THE WORLD AND ITS PEOPLE FROM THOSE MUTANTS WHO WOULD DO IT HARM.

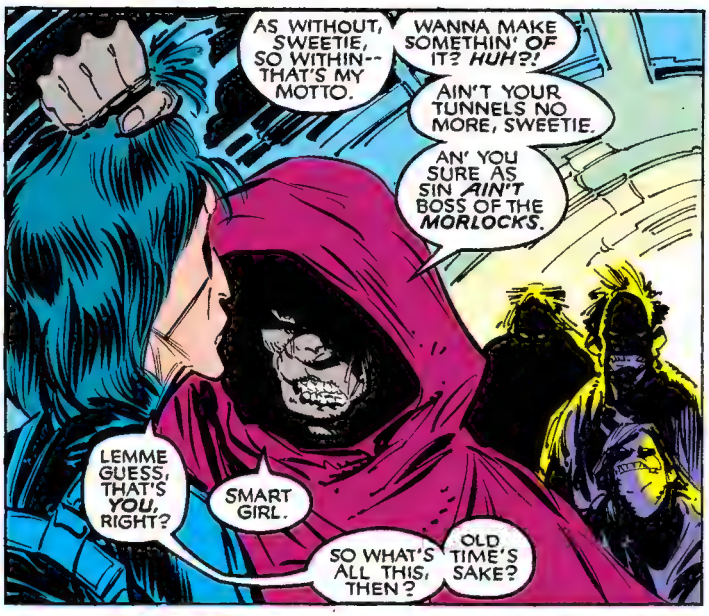

HERE, TOO, A LOT'S HAPPENED SINCE.
THE ORIGINAL TEAM'S TAKEN ON A NEW NAME AND MISSION, AS X-FACTOR...
...WHILE THE SURVIVORS OF THE CURRENT TEAM BELONG NOW TO THE ENGLISH GROUP, EXCALIBUR.
XAVIER HIMSELF IS OFF PAST THE FAR SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE WITH THE STARJAMMERS, UNABLE TO RETURN HOME.
AS FOR THE X-MEN THEMSELVES-- WELL, THE WORLD BELIEVES THEM TO BE DEAD.


THAT'S WHY CALLISTO WAS SENT BACK TO THE MANSION, TO SEAL THE UNDERGROUND COMPLEX-- STILL INTACT BENEATH IT--AND KEEP ITS SECRETS FROM FALLING INTO THE WRONG HANDS.
FAR AS THAT GOES, THE SECRETS ARE IN GREAT SHAPE.
IT'S CALLISTO HERSELF WHO'S GOT TROUBLE.
BEEN AN AGE SINCE YOU BEEN 'ROUND THESE PARTS, CAL.
FORTY MILES SOUTH FROM XAVIER'S ESTATE, A MILE BELOW MANHATTAN'S STREETS, IN THE HUGE, VAULTING TUNNEL COMPLEX SHE LONG AGO CHRISTENED, THE "ALLEY."

LIKE THE WAY WE WELCOME YOU HOME?

SURE YOU DO.


YOU ALWAYS WERE A TWISTED PIECE OF WORK, MASQUE.
I SEE THAT HASN'T CHANGED.

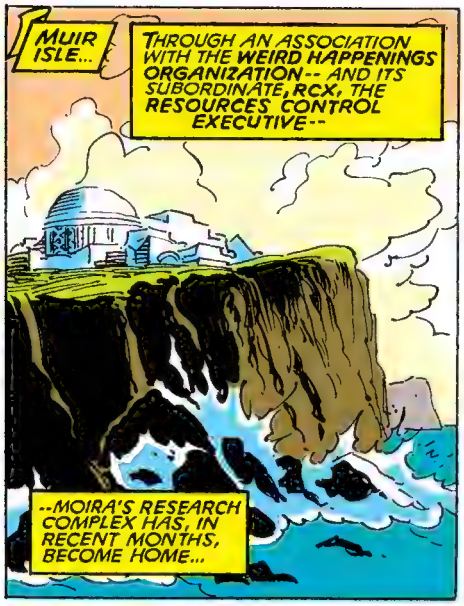

AS WITHOUT, SWEETIE, SO WITHIN-- THAT'S MY MOTTO.
WANNA MAKE SOMETHIN' OF IT? HUH?!
AIN'T YOUR TUNNELS NO MORE, SWEETIE.
AN' YOU SURE AS SIN AIN'T BOSS OF THE MORLOCKS.
LEMME GUESS, THAT'S YOU, RIGHT?
SMART GIRL.
SO WHAT'S ALL THIS, THEN?
OLD TIME'S SAKE?

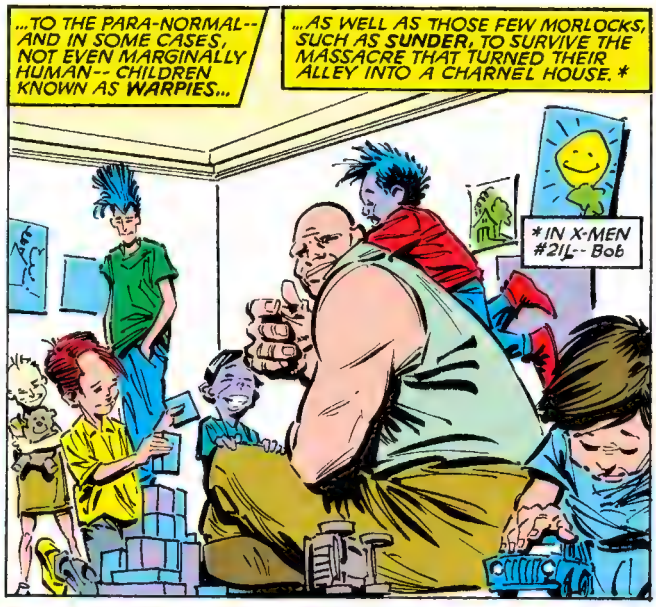
DON'T YOU WISH.
I WANT THE ACCESS CODES TO THE X-MEN'S BASEMENT.
I'LL JUST BET YOU DO.
I'M SERIOUS, CALLISTO.
YOU GIVE 'EM TO ME, OR I'LL MAKE YOU WISH YOU'D NEVER BEEN BORN!

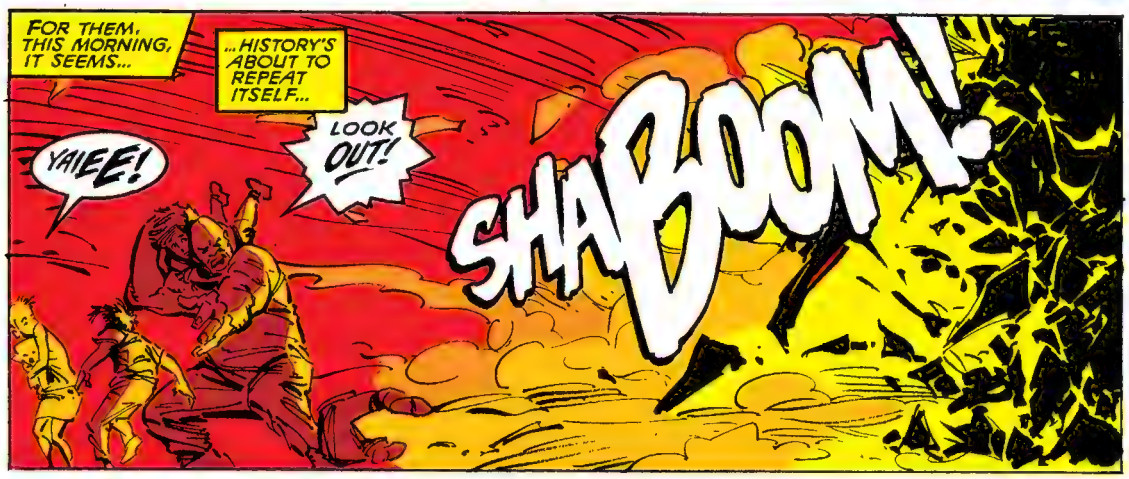
WHEN YOU'RE DONE...
...BETTER MAKE SURE I'M DEAD.
'CAUSE IF I'M NOT, YOU WILL BE.

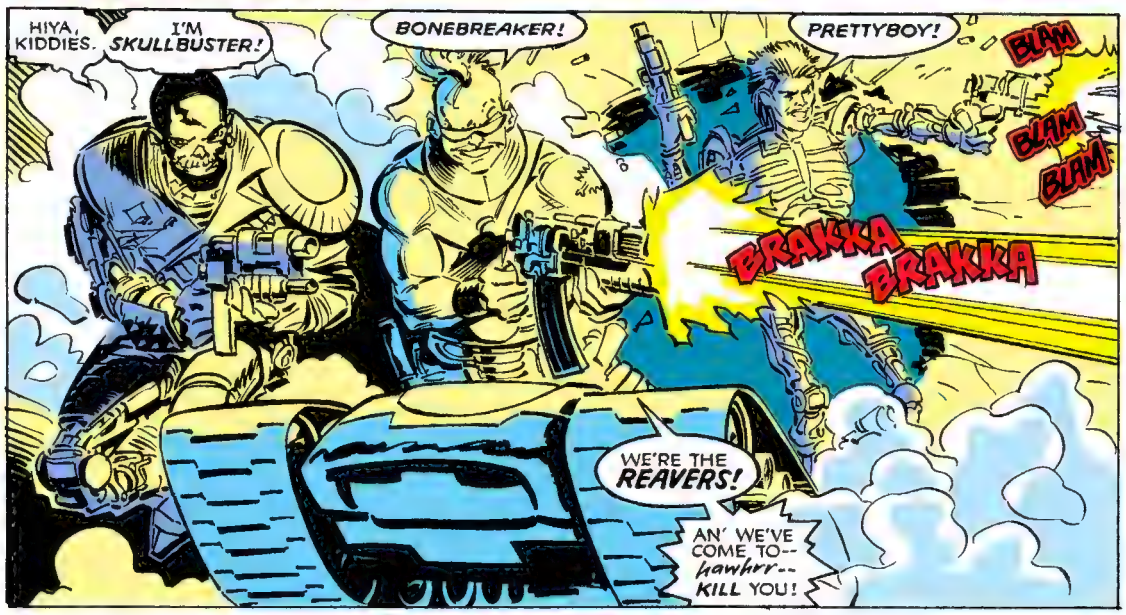
WHEN I'M DONE, SWEETIE...
...YOU'LL BE LUCKY TO HAVE A FACE TO CALL YOUR OWN.
FLESH AND BLOOD ARE PLAY-DOUGH TO ME, TO BE SHAPED HOWEVER I PLEASE.
CONSIDER ME AN ARTIST, WHO USES LIVING CANVASES, AND WHERE YOU'RE CONCERNED I'M OF A MIND...

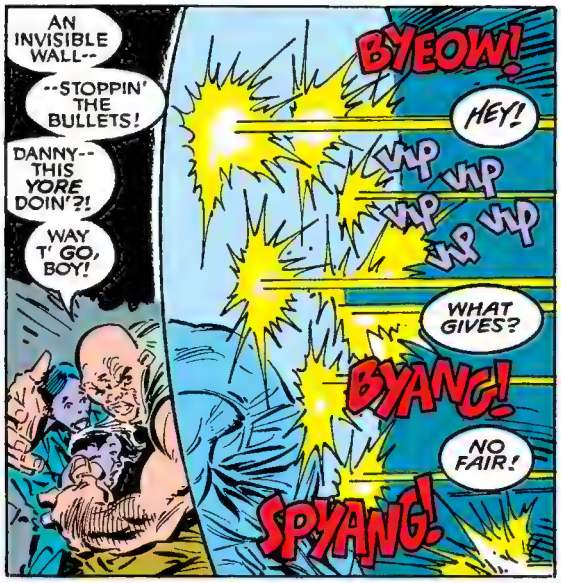
...TO CREATE A MASTER-PIECE.

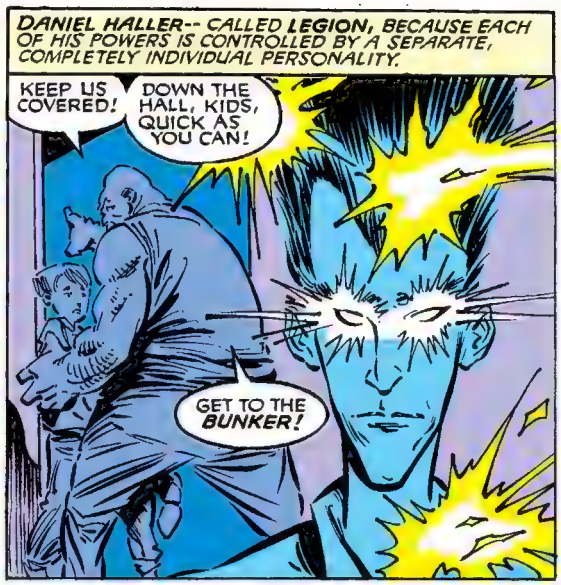

MUIR ISLE...
THROUGH AN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WEIRD HAPPENINGS ORGANIZATION-- AND ITS SUBORDINATE, RCX, THE RESOURCES CONTROL EXECUTIVE--
--MOIRA'S RESEARCH COMPLEX HAS, IN RECENT MONTHS, BECOME HOME...

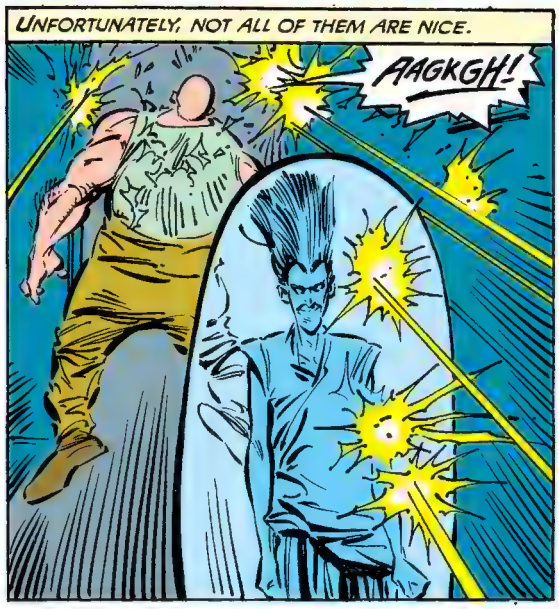

...TO THE PARA-NORMAL-- AND IN SOME CASES, NOT EVEN MARGINALLY HUMAN-- CHILDREN KNOWN AS WARPIES...
...AS WELL AS THOSE FEW MORLOCKS, SUCH AS SUNDER, TO SURVIVE THE MASSACRE THAT TURNED THEIR ALLEY INTO A CHARNEL HOUSE. *
*IN X-MEN #211-- Bob


FOR THEM, THIS MORNING, IT SEEMS...
...HISTORY'S ABOUT TO REPEAT ITSELF...
YAIEE!
LOOK OUT!
SHABOOM!

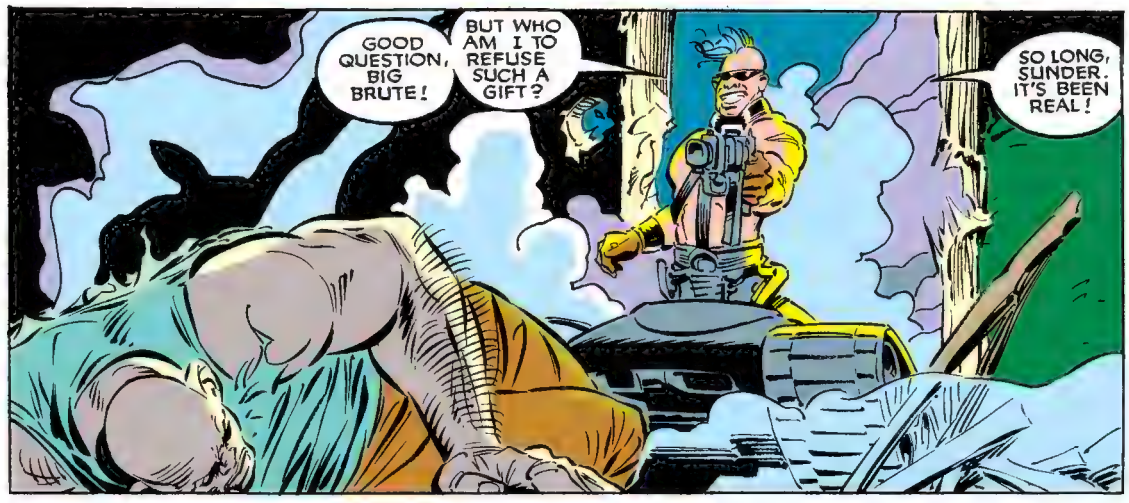

HIYA, KIDDIES.
I'M SKULLBUSTER!
BONEBREAKER!
PRETTYBOY!
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BRAKKA
BRAKKA
WE'RE THE REAVERS!
AN' WE'VE COME TO-- hawhrr-- KILL YOU!

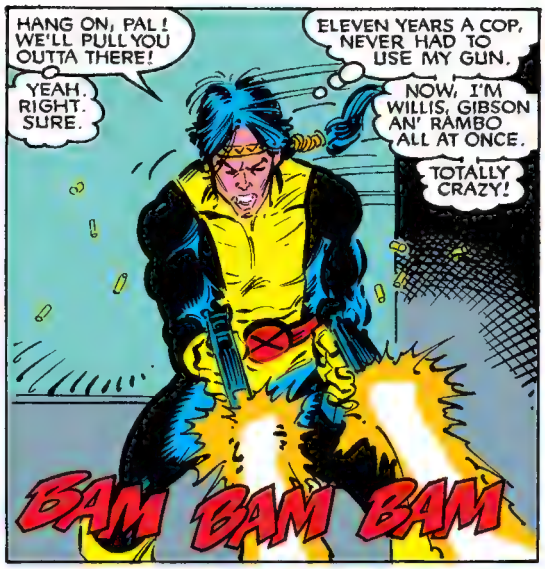

AN INVISIBLE WALL--
--STOPPIN' THE BULLETS!
DANNY-- THIS YORE DOIN'?!
WAY T' GO, BOY!
BYEOW!
HEY!
VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP
WHAT GIVES?
BYANG!
NO FAIR!
SPYANG!


DANIEL HALLER-- CALLED LEGION, BECAUSE EACH OF HIS POWERS IS CONTROLLED BY A SEPARATE, COMPLETELY INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY.
KEEP US COVERED!
DOWN THE HALL, KIDS, QUICK AS YOU CAN!
GET TO THE BUNKER!

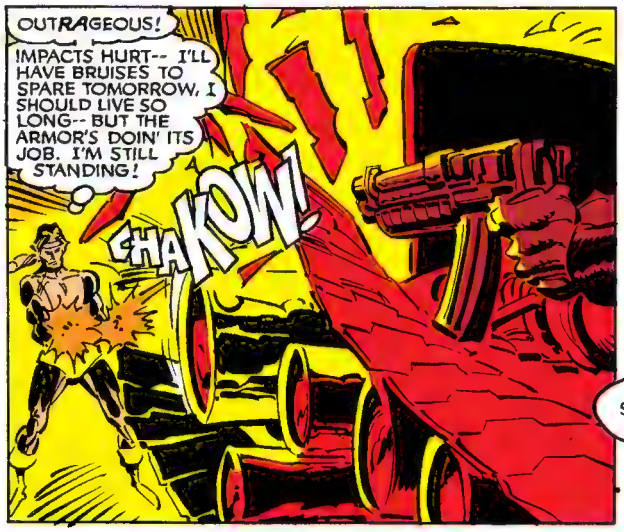

UNFORTUNATELY, NOT ALL OF THEM ARE NICE.
AAGKGH!

DANNY--
--WHY'D YOU DROP YOUR SHIELD?!
HELP HELP HELP HELP
RUN RUN RUN


GOOD QUESTION, BIG BRUTE!
BUT WHO AM I TO REFUSE SUCH A GIFT?
SO LONG, SUNDER. IT'S BEEN REAL!

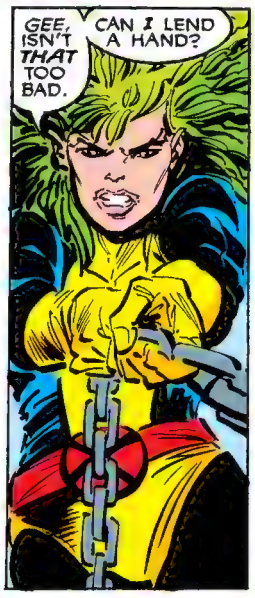

HANG ON, PAL! WE'LL PULL YOU OUTTA THERE!
YEAH. RIGHT. SURE.
ELEVEN YEARS A COP, NEVER HAD TO USE MY GUN.
NOW, I'M WILLIS, GIBSON AN' RAMBO ALL AT ONCE.
TOTALLY CRAZY!
BAM BAM BAM

THE BOY INJUN!
I GOTTA BULLET-PROOF SHIELD TO COVER ME, PAL. DON'T 'PEAR TO ME LIKE YOU'RE SO LUCKY!
BRAKKABRAK!

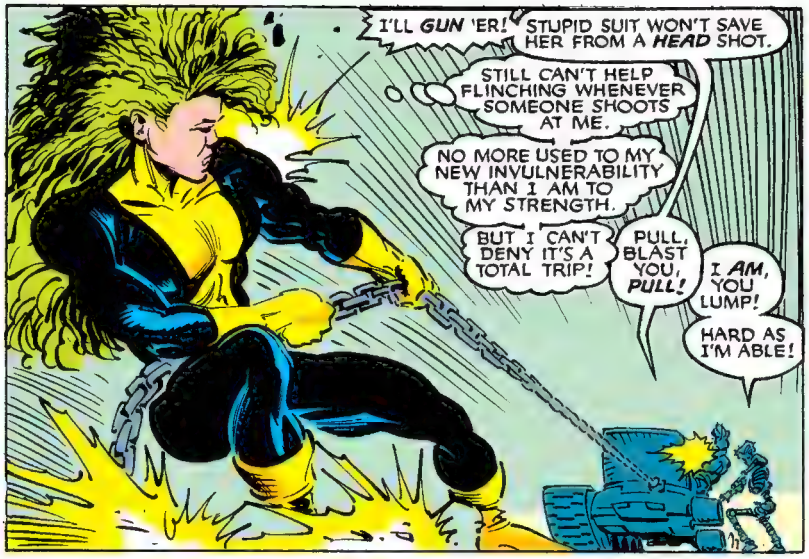

OUTRAGEOUS!
IMPACTS HURT-- I'LL HAVE BRUISES TO SPARE TOMORROW. I SHOULD LIVE SO LONG-- BUT THE ARMOR'S DOIN' ITS JOB. I'M STILL STANDING!
CHAKOW!

NICE SHOOTING, TOM!
WITHOUT THAT TRACK, BONEBREAKER'S IMMOBILIZED!

WHAT IS THIS?!
SHE'S POKIN' HOLES IN MY CHASSIS!
BETTER IT THAN YOU, BONE.
LATCHES ARE JAMMED, I CAN'T SPRING YOUR TORSO FROM ITS HARNESS.

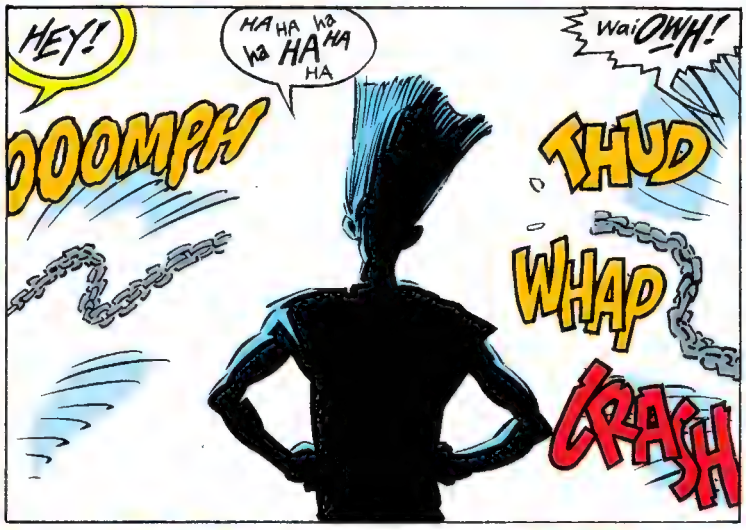

GEE, ISN'T THAT TOO BAD.
CAN I LEND A HAND?

SHE'S PULLIN', PRETTY BOY--
--DON'T LET HER GET ME!
--WHO IS SHE, ANYWAY, SHE ISN'T ON THE BRIEFING SPECS--
I'M TRYING, BONE --BUT SHE'S A POWERHOUSE!


I'LL GUN 'ER!
STUPID SUIT WON'T SAVE HER FROM A HEAD SHOT.
STILL CAN'T HELP FLINCHING WHENEVER SOMEONE SHOOTS AT ME.
NO MORE USED TO MY NEW INVULNERABILITY THAN I AM TO MY STRENGTH.
BUT I CAN'T DENY IT'S A TOTAL TRIP!
PULL, BLAST YOU, PULL!
I AM, YOU LUMP!
HARD AS I'M ABLE!

BUT THEN...

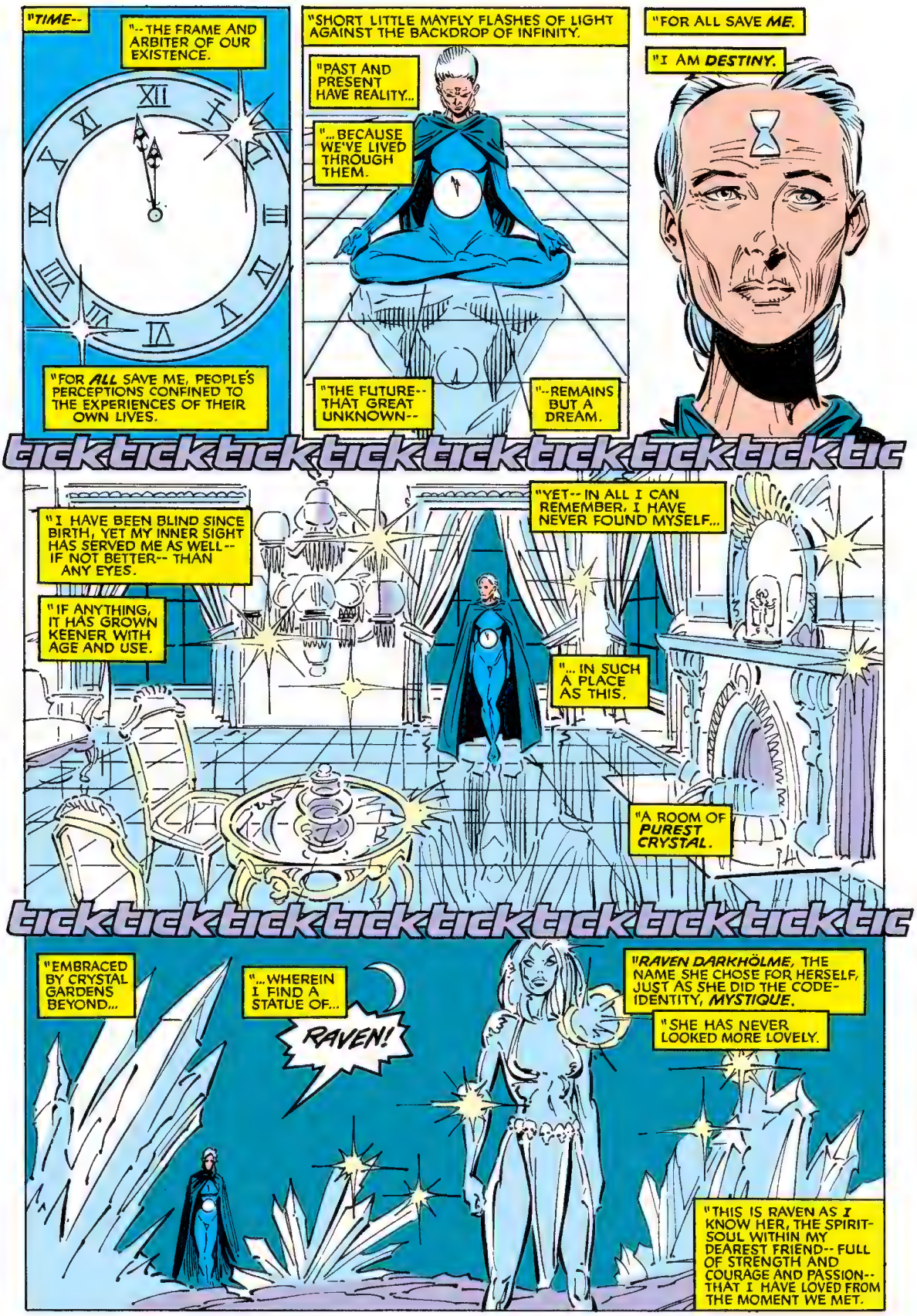
SNAP!


HEY!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
DOOMPH
WaiOWH!
THUD
WHAP
CRASH

SO TELL ME, KID...
...WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
WHOSE SIDE YOU ON, ANYWAY?
KLATCH!

FIRE!
KID'S NOT JUST A TELE-KINETIC...
...HE'S A PYROTIC, TOO! I'M BURNIN'!
FWOOSH!

DANNY, YOU OKAY?
C'MON, LET'S CATCH UP WITH THE OTHERS.
WILL THEY ATTACK AGAIN? WILL THERE BE MORE FIGHTING?
'FRAID SO.
GOOD. I CAN'T WAIT. THIS IS FUN.


"TIME--
"--THE FRAME AND ARBITER OF OUR EXISTENCE.
"FOR ALL SAVE ME, PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS CONFINED TO THE EXPERIENCES OF THEIR OWN LIVES.
"SHORT LITTLE MAYFLY FLASHES OF LIGHT AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF INFINITY.
"PAST AND PRESENT HAVE REALITY...
"...BECAUSE WE'VE LIVED THROUGH THEM.
"THE FUTURE--THAT GREAT UNKNOWN--
"--REMAINS BUT A DREAM.
"FOR ALL SAVE ME.
"I AM DESTINY.
tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tic
"I HAVE BEEN BLIND SINCE BIRTH, YET MY INNER SIGHT HAS SERVED ME AS WELL--IF NOT BETTER-- THAN ANY EYES.
"IF ANYTHING, IT HAS GROWN KEENER WITH AGE AND USE.
"YET-- IN ALL I CAN REMEMBER, I HAVE NEVER FOUND MYSELF...
"... IN SUCH A PLACE AS THIS.
"A ROOM OF PUREST CRYSTAL.
tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tic
"EMBRACED BY CRYSTAL GARDENS BEYOND...
"...WHEREIN I FIND A STATUE OF...
RAVEN!
"RAVEN DARKHÖLME, THE NAME SHE CHOSE FOR HERSELF, JUST AS SHE DID THE CODE-IDENTITY, MYSTIQUE.
"SHE HAS NEVER LOOKED MORE LOVELY.
"THIS IS RAVEN AS I KNOW HER, THE SPIRIT-SOUL WITHIN MY DEAREST FRIEND-- FULL OF STRENGTH AND COURAGE AND PASSION--THAT I HAVE LOVED FROM THE MOMENT WE MET.

"BUT SHE IS NOT ALONE HERE.

"EVERYWHERE I TURN, STATUES ABOUND.

"EACH EXEMPLIFYING THE NOBLEST, FINEST ASPECTS OF THE PERSON THEY REPRESENT.

"POSSESSING SUCH BEAUTY, THEY MAKE MY HEART ACHE.

tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tick tic

"THEN, I REALIZE...

"...THAT *EVERYTHING* AROUND ME IS CARVED FROM CRYSTAL.

"BIRDS, ANIMALS, INSECTS, FLOWERS, EVEN THE DISTANT MOUNTAINS AND THE GROUND BENEATH MY FEET--

"-- ALL FROZEN.

"IN A MOMENT OF SUBLIME, ABSOLUTE, TRANSCENDENT...

"...*PERFECTION.*

tick tick tick tick tick tick tick BONG

"OVERHEAD, A CRYSTAL MOON GLITTERS IN THE FIRMAMENT BESIDE A CRYSTAL SUN.

"AND SUDDENLY, *I* AM THE ONE *'OVERHEAD'*...

"...WITH THE VAST PANOPLY OF THE MILKY WAY STREWN BEFORE ME.

"ALL THE STARS THAT EVER WERE...

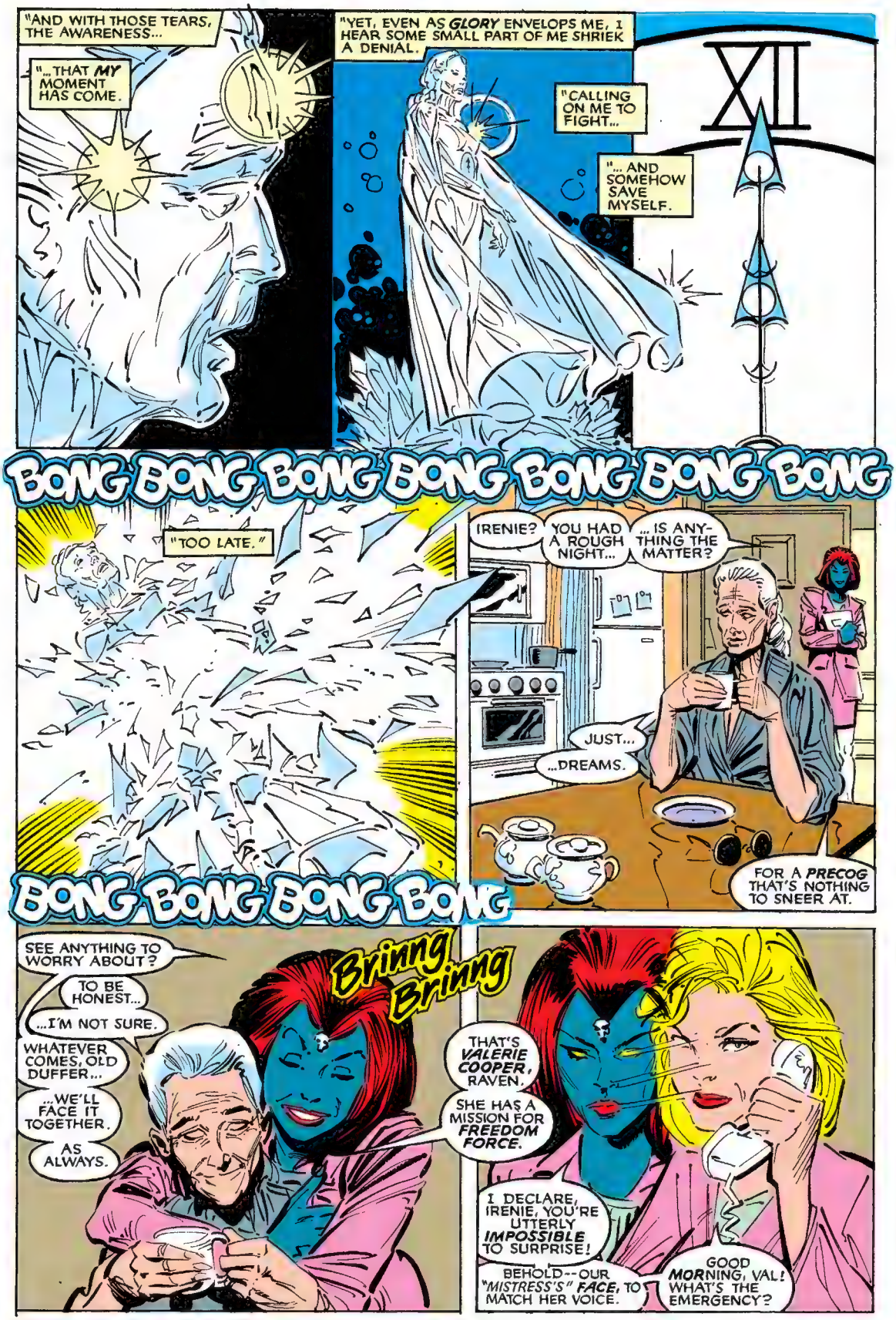
"...THE BEINGS THAT LIVE ON THEIR ATTENDANT WORLDS...

"...*NO MORE.*

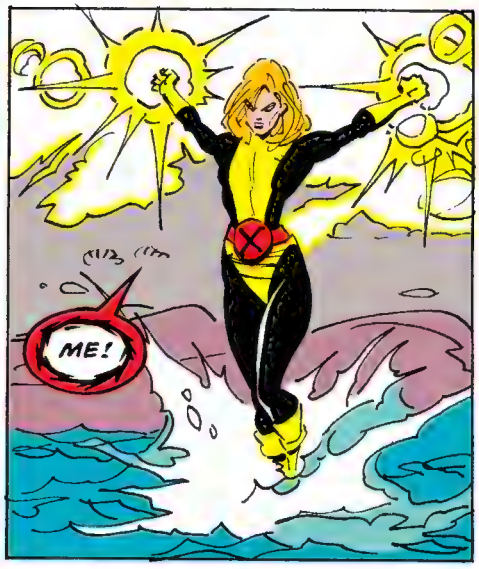
"I WEEP.

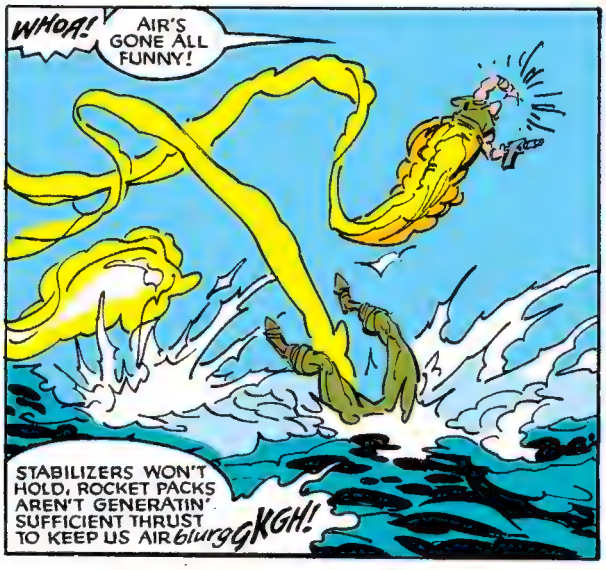
"WITHOUT KNOWING WHETHER FROM GRIEF AT WHAT'S BEEN LOST...

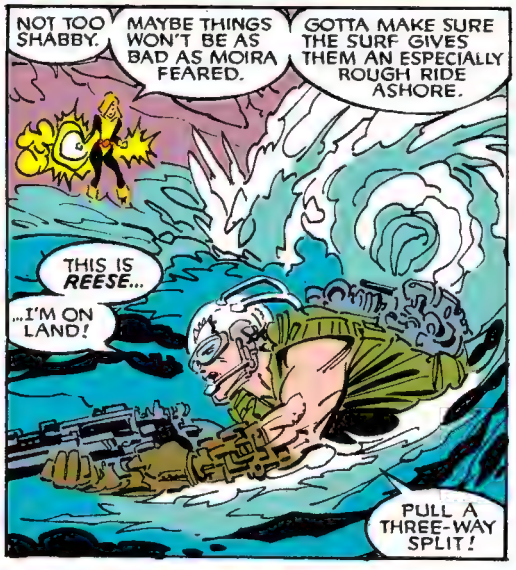
"...OR JOY AT THE INDESCRIBABLE *GLORY* THAT REMAINS.

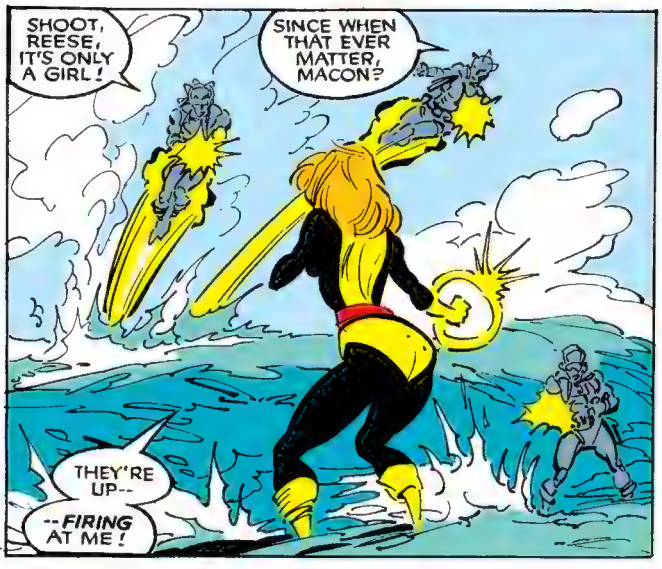

"AND WITH THOSE TEARS, THE AWARENESS...
"...THAT MY MOMENT HAS COME.
"YET, EVEN AS GLORY ENVELOPS ME, I HEAR SOME SMALL PART OF ME SHRIEK A DENIAL.
"CALLING ON ME TO FIGHT...
"... AND SOMEHOW SAVE MYSELF.
XII
BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG
"TOO LATE."
IRENIE?
YOU HAD A ROUGH NIGHT...
...IS ANYTHING THE MATTER?
JUST...
...DREAMS.
FOR A PRECOG THAT'S NOTHING TO SNEER AT.
BONG BONG BONG BONG
SEE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT?
TO BE HONEST...
...I'M NOT SURE.
WHATEVER COMES, OLD DUFFER...
...WE'LL FACE IT TOGETHER.
AS ALWAYS.
Brinng Brinng
THAT'S VALERIE COOPER, RAVEN.
SHE HAS A MISSION FOR FREEDOM FORCE.
I DECLARE, IRENIE, YOU'RE UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE TO SURPRISE!
BEHOLD--OUR "MISTRESS'S" FACE, TO MATCH HER VOICE.
GOOD MORNING, VAL! WHAT'S THE EMERGENCY?

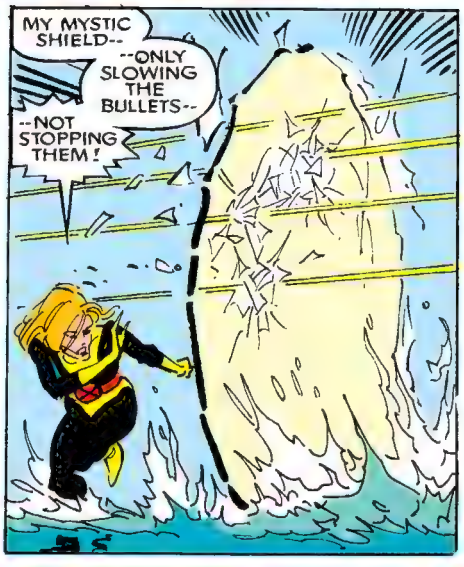
MUIR ISLE...
FIRST TEAM'S ON THE ROCK.
TAKING MAJOR FIRE...
...SO WATCH YOURSELVES!
HEY, REESE, WE ALREADY POPPED BANSHEE--
--WHO THEY GOT LEFT THAT'S ANY REAL THREAT?

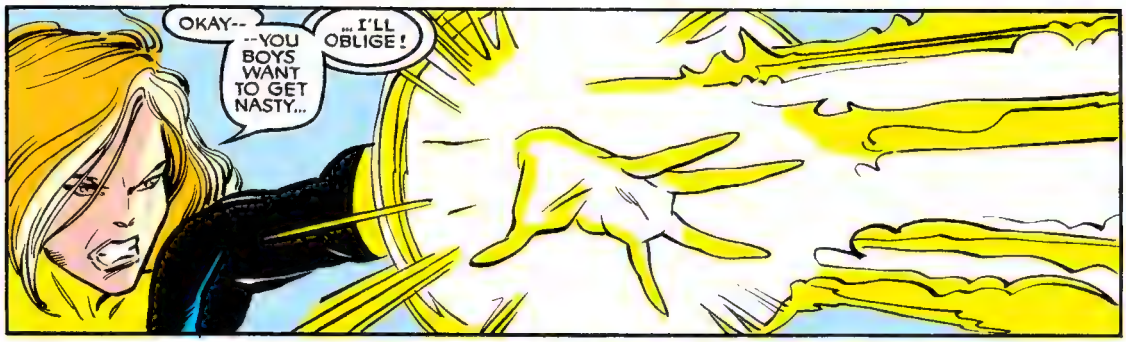

ME!

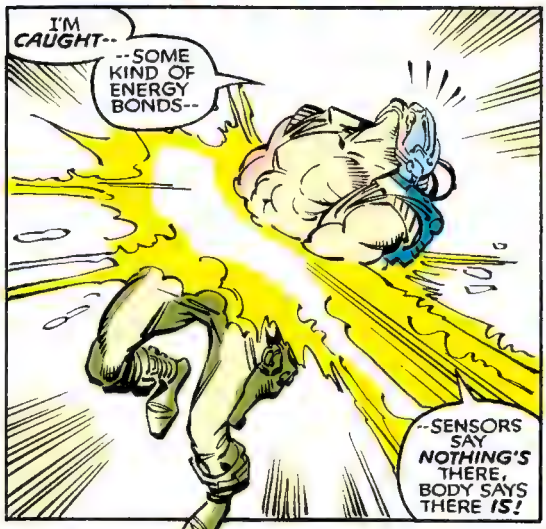

WHOA!
AIR'S GONE ALL FUNNY!
STABILIZERS WON'T HOLD, ROCKET PACKS AREN'T GENERATIN' SUFFICIENT THRUST TO KEEP US AIR
blurg
GKGH!


NOT TOO SHABBY.
MAYBE THINGS WON'T BE AS BAD AS MOIRA FEARED.
GOTTA MAKE SURE THE SURF GIVES THEM AN ESPECIALLY ROUGH RIDE ASHORE.
THIS IS REESE...
...I'M ON LAND!
PULL A THREE-WAY SPLIT!

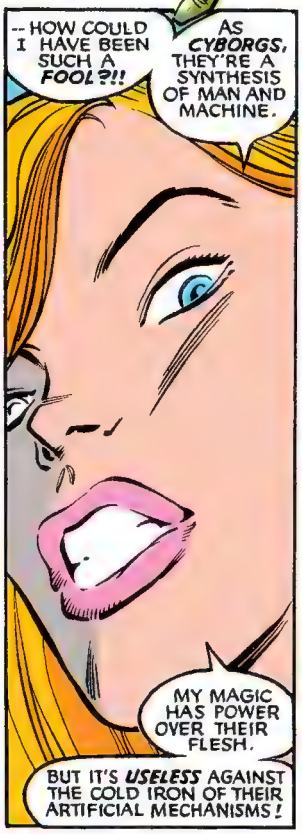

SHOOT, REESE, IT'S ONLY A GIRL!
SINCE WHEN THAT EVER MATTER, MACON?
THEY'RE UP--
--FIRING AT ME!

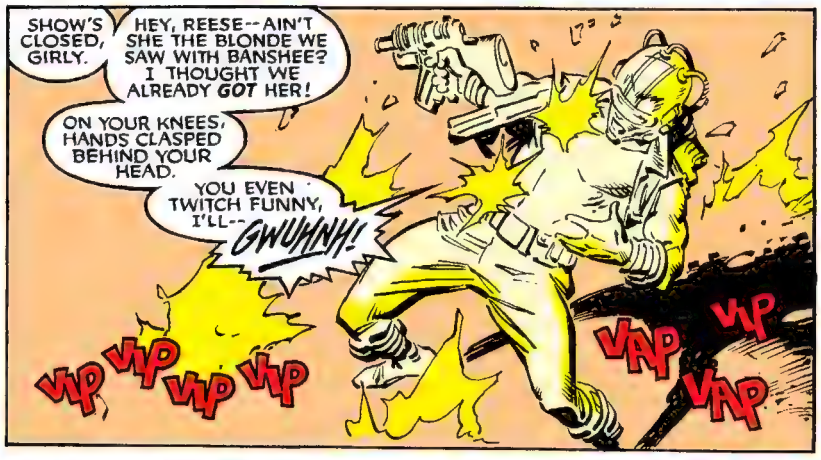

MY MYSTIC SHIELD--
--ONLY SLOWING THE BULLETS--
--NOT STOPPING THEM!

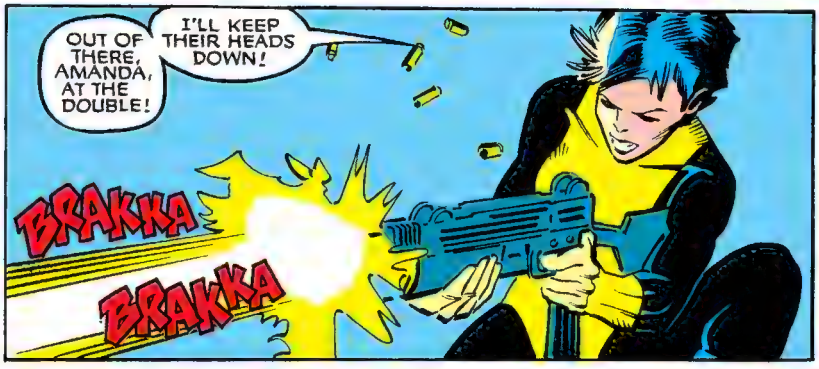

OKAY--
--YOU BOYS WANT TO GET NASTY...
...I'LL OBLIGE!


I'M CAUGHT--
--SOME KIND OF ENERGY BONDS--
--SENSORS SAY NOTHING'S THERE, BODY SAYS THERE IS!

HE--BROKE FREE!
BUT THAT SHOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE.
UNLESS--


--HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SUCH A FOOL?!!
AS CYBORGS, THEY'RE A SYNTHESIS OF MAN AND MACHINE.
MY MAGIC HAS POWER OVER THEIR FLESH.
BUT IT'S USELESS AGAINST THE COLD IRON OF THEIR ARTIFICIAL MECHANISMS!


SHOW'S CLOSED, GIRLY.
HEY, REESE--AIN'T SHE THE BLONDE WE SAW WITH BANSHEE? I THOUGHT WE ALREADY GOT HER!
ON YOUR KNEES, HANDS CLASPED BEHIND YOUR HEAD.
YOU EVEN TWITCH FUNNY, I'LL--
GWUHNH!
VIP VIP VIP VIP
VAP VIP VAP


OUT OF THERE, AMANDA, AT THE DOUBLE!
I'LL KEEP THEIR HEADS DOWN!
BRAKKA
BRAKKA

BULLPEN BULLETINS

Quote of the Month

"Heaven is all booked up so they sent me to Treasure Island instead!"

– Remo Williams
The Destroyer #1

Stan's Soapbox

You'd never guess where I am! In fact, don't even bother trying—I'll tell you. These weighty words are being pounded out on an old fashioned typewriter in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia!

I'm here in a beautiful hotel on the Adriatic Sea because it finally happened! No, I don't mean Marvel finally sent me into exile! This is even better—production has just started on our big, new Captain America feature film!

That's right! There's an entire film crew here in the mighty mountains of Yugoslavia, shooting some of the most exciting action sequences you've ever seen! Then, after these scenes are completed, the entire production staff will move to other locations throughout the world in our unceasing effort to bring you a movie that'll do the ol' shield-slinger proud!

The film is being produced by 21st Century Film Corporation and directed by Albert Pyun, one of the most talented young directors to come down the pike. Hawaiian-born Albert has been a Captain America fan for as long as he can remember and he's determined that this production will do our red, white and blue hero proud.

Starring as Cap is handsome, young and rugged Matt Salinger, who has starred in many stage productions. Not only is he a two-fisted hero type, but the guy can also act! You'll also find such popular favorites as Ned Beatty, Ronnie Cox, Darren McGavin and Scott Paulin in the cast. Scott plays the reprehensible Red Skull, and you should see the make-up that was created for the role. It's really something else!

As for the stunts, many of them will take your breath away! I don't want to describe any now cause it'll spoil the surprises, but those of you who like your action fast and furious will be in superhero heaven!

But don't get the wrong idea. Our off-beat new Captain America spectacular isn't merely a mindless rock 'em sock 'em oater. No way! This one's got a real story to it with suspense, sensitivity and carefully crafted characterization. You'll see the startling origin of the Red Skull as well as the origin of Cap himself. Then, as the scene shifts from the past to the present, you'll be swept away in a surge of dazzling drama as you follow the gut-wrenching metamorphosis of America's great sentinel of liberty from his dazed awakening in a world he never made to his single-handed battle to save civilization from the terrifying scourge of the Red Skull's deadliest threat!

Well, that's about all I can tell you for now. The shooting's just started and I'm off once again to put my own two-cents worth into things. I'll bring you another progress report next month (as if anyone could stop me!). So remember, wherever you go, whatever you do, think Marvel! Cap would want it that way!

Excelsior!

Or as we say in Yugoslavia . . .

Zivelil

Stan Lee

ITEM: Editor *Howard* (wacky) *Mackie* seems to be busting his buttons with pride lately. Could it be the success of the recently launched QUASAR comic, starring the Cosmic Avenger? Or perhaps he's all excited about the humongous Avengers crossover coming this fall called "Acts of Vengeance"? Nah, the real reason for Howard's unbounded joy is that the big goof became a daddy! On May 7, 1989 his wife, *Deborah Highley*, gave birth to *Samantha Highley Mackie*. Congratulations to the proud parents!

ITEM: Attention shoppers! Seems there was a goof that ran in the AMERICAN COMICS ad on page 28 of the Marvel comics that had a July cover date (X-MEN #246, for example). The Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Player's Handbook (Second Edition) was priced incorrectly at $9.95 instead of $16.95. The fine folks at AMERICAN COMICS said they will honor all orders at the lower price. Also, the X-MEN Nintendo game has been delayed by the manufacturer until September. Please understand that these problems were unintentional and were due to last-minute product changes conflicting with printers' schedules. It only goes to show, even our advertisers are confused!

ITEM: Avid soap opera buff, fearless *Fred Hembeck*, reports that Ryan's Hope's *Joe Novak*, when asked by his wife to name his favorite book, confessed "old Spider-Man comics." Too bad he was blown to bits later in the same episode.

PRO FILE: D.G. Chichester

Editor/Assistant Editor on: All my sound and film projects at New York University.
Marvel freelance credits (past): DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH, *Archie Goodwin's* version of JUSTICE, SOLO AVENGERS, WEST COAST AVENGERS (featuring their greatest battle ever against the Defiler!), POWER LINE, DOCTOR ZERO and SAINT GEORGE
Marvel freelance credits (present): CRITICAL MASS, assorted and sordid issues of SHIELD, THE DEFILER and AL D'AMATO graphic novels
My place of birth is: Different, depending on the set of I.D. that I'm using
People who knew me in high school thought I was: Going to perform experiments on their family pets.
My hobbies are: Phoning in my friends' names to "America's Most Wanted."
My pet peeves are: Oreo and Gabe, the spastic Dalmation.
My favorite performers are: James "The Amazing Randi" Randi, Jesse "The Body" Ventura, and anyone else with quotation marks between their first and last names.
The last good book I read was: *Dictionary of Demons* by Fred Gettings
The last good movie I saw was: Later stolen from the video store I had earlier rented it from.

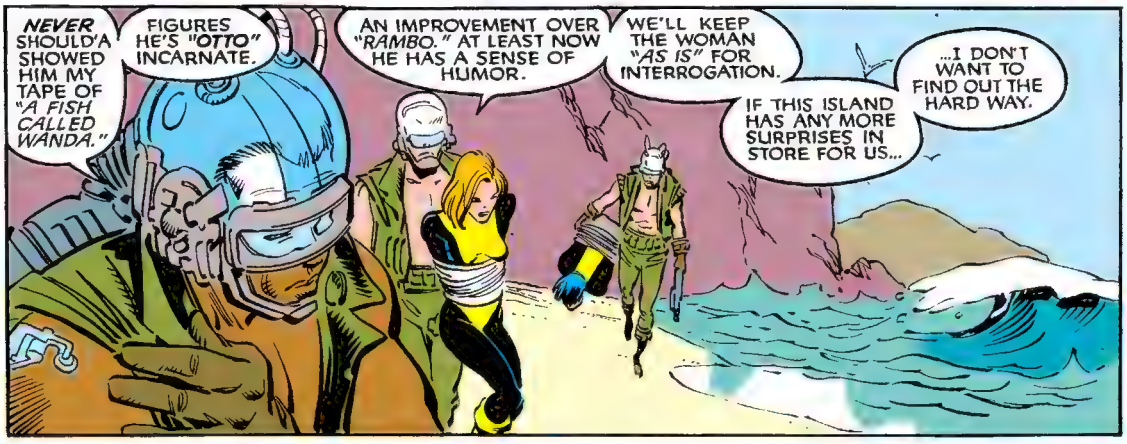
If they were making a movie of my life, I'd like to see my part played by: Dick York, William Shatner, or Vincent Price
My oddest habit is: Using the word "nebulous" in a sarcastic way
My greatest accomplishment outside the comics field is: Being crowned "One of the two meanest persons in the world."
The reason I got into comics was: Because I wanted to buy a pizza, and so I could use the word "nebulous" a lot.
The biggest influences on my work include: Rod Serling, Clint Eastwood and Wile E. Coyote
The single work of which I am most proud is: Waiting for a pre-determined amount of radioactive isotope to make it fully operational
My greatest unfulfilled ambition in the comics field is: Subject to incarceration in the 48 continental United States
The worst part of my job is: Only truly describable to drunken Merchant Marines
When nobody's looking I like to: Quickly unplug their VCRs and then plug them back in so they blink "12:00."
The one thing I really want the world to know about me is: Twenty-one minutes into the "Twilight Zone" episode, "Walking Distance"

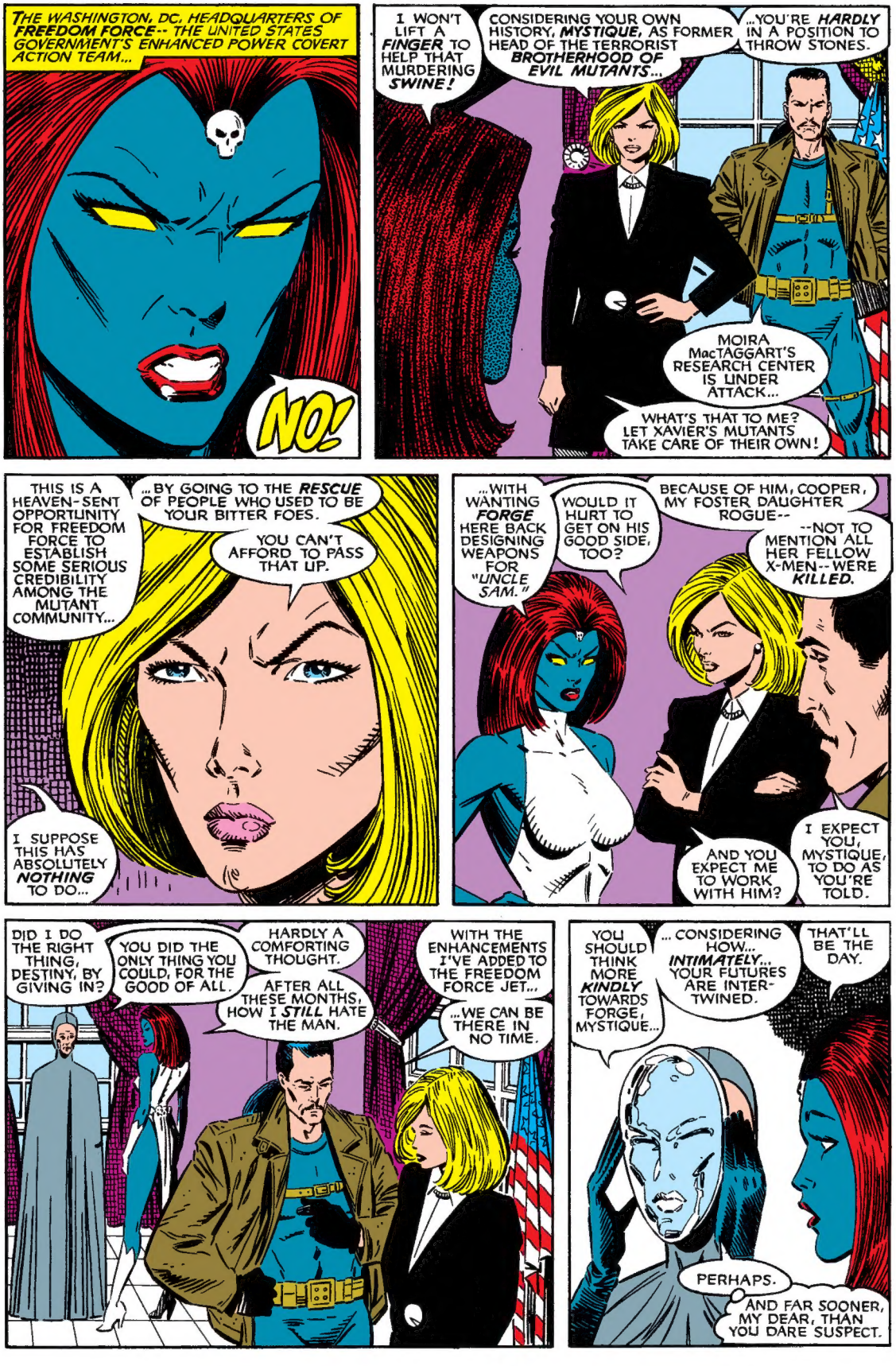
MACON--!
I'LL LIVE, COLE.
WHO'S UP THERE?!
SCANLOK MARKS HER AS THAT LIMEY BRIGADIER.
LAYIN' DOWN FIRE LIKE A REAL PRO.
VAM VAM VAM
A GENERAL THAT ACTUALLY KNOWS HER BUSINESS, WHOEVER'D'A THOUGHT?

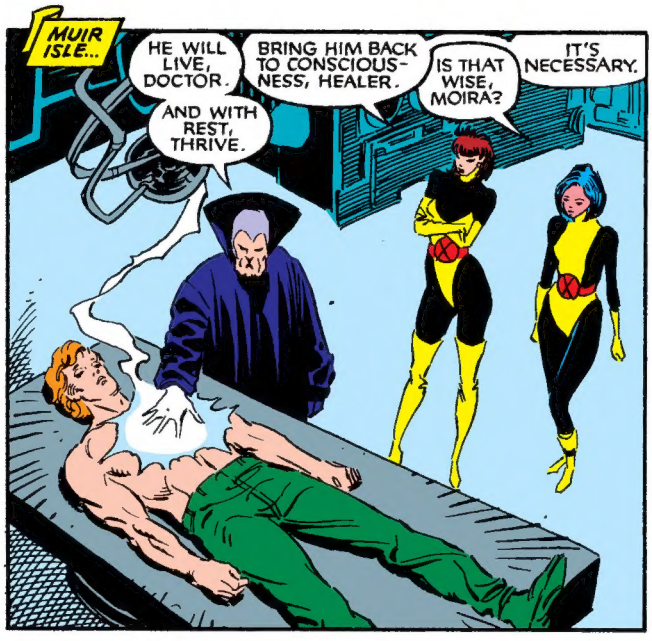
TROUBLE FOR YOU IS, HONEYBUNCH...
...SO DO WE.
EXPLOSIVE SHELLS--
--SHATTERING THE CLIFF-FACE!

LET HER SPLAT, BRO?
YOUR CALL.
HEY, COLE, I'M A SOFT-HEARTED KIND'A GUY...

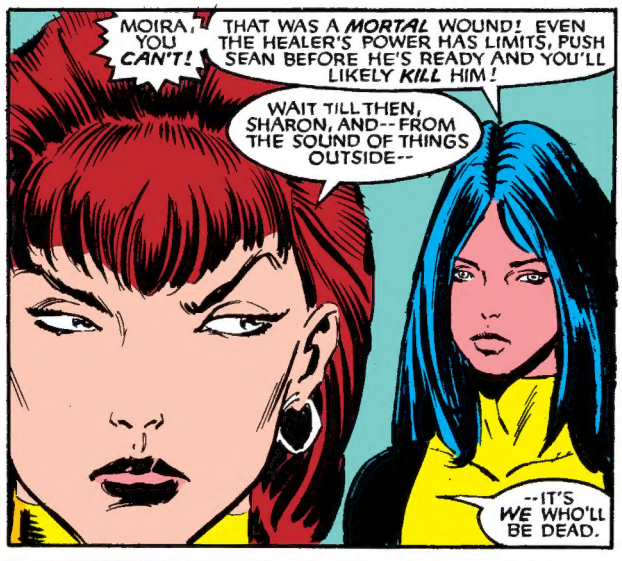
SOFT-HEADED'S MORE LIKE IT.
'SIDES, THANKS TO OL' BOSS-MAN, MR. GENIUS PIERCE, YOU AIN'T GOT NO HEART.
NOT A FLESH-'N'-BLOOD, HUMAN ONE, ANYWAY.
BE NICE, BABE, OR WE'LL TRY THIS AGAIN.
OR MAYBE I'LL MISS THE CATCH-- oops, WHATTA MESS!


NEVER SHOULD'A SHOWED HIM MY TAPE OF "A FISH CALLED WANDA."
FIGURES HE'S "OTTO" INCARNATE.
AN IMPROVEMENT OVER "RAMBO." AT LEAST NOW HE HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR.
WE'LL KEEP THE WOMAN "AS IS" FOR INTERROGATION.
IF THIS ISLAND HAS ANY MORE SURPRISES IN STORE FOR US...
...I DON'T WANT TO FIND OUT THE HARD WAY.

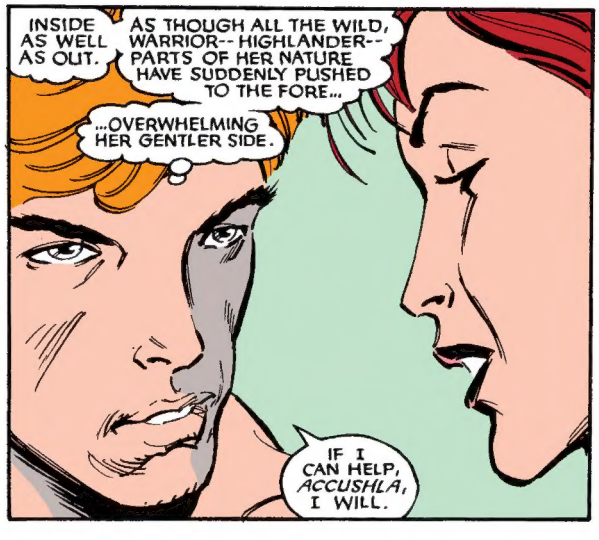

THE WASHINGTON, DC, HEADQUARTERS OF FREEDOM FORCE-- THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S ENHANCED POWER COVERT ACTION TEAM...
NO!
I WON'T LIFT A FINGER TO HELP THAT MURDERING SWINE!
CONSIDERING YOUR OWN HISTORY, MYSTIQUE, AS FORMER HEAD OF THE TERRORIST BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS...
...YOU'RE HARDLY IN A POSITION TO THROW STONES.
MOIRA MacTAGGART'S RESEARCH CENTER IS UNDER ATTACK...
WHAT'S THAT TO ME? LET XAVIER'S MUTANTS TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN!
THIS IS A HEAVEN-SENT OPPORTUNITY FOR FREEDOM FORCE TO ESTABLISH SOME SERIOUS CREDIBILITY AMONG THE MUTANT COMMUNITY...
...BY GOING TO THE RESCUE OF PEOPLE WHO USED TO BE YOUR BITTER FOES.
YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO PASS THAT UP.
I SUPPOSE THIS HAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO...
...WITH WANTING FORGE HERE BACK DESIGNING WEAPONS FOR "UNCLE SAM."
WOULD IT HURT TO GET ON HIS GOOD SIDE, TOO?
BECAUSE OF HIM, COOPER, MY FOSTER DAUGHTER ROGUE--
--NOT TO MENTION ALL HER FELLOW X-MEN--WERE KILLED.
AND YOU EXPECT ME TO WORK WITH HIM?
I EXPECT YOU, MYSTIQUE, TO DO AS YOU'RE TOLD.
DID I DO THE RIGHT THING, DESTINY, BY GIVING IN?
YOU DID THE ONLY THING YOU COULD, FOR THE GOOD OF ALL.
HARDLY A COMFORTING THOUGHT.
AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS, HOW I STILL HATE THE MAN.
WITH THE ENHANCEMENTS I'VE ADDED TO THE FREEDOM FORCE JET...
...WE CAN BE THERE IN NO TIME.
YOU SHOULD THINK MORE KINDLY TOWARDS FORGE, MYSTIQUE...
... CONSIDERING HOW... INTIMATELY... YOUR FUTURES ARE INTER-TWINED.
THAT'LL BE THE DAY.
PERHAPS.
AND FAR SOONER, MY DEAR, THAN YOU DARE SUSPECT.

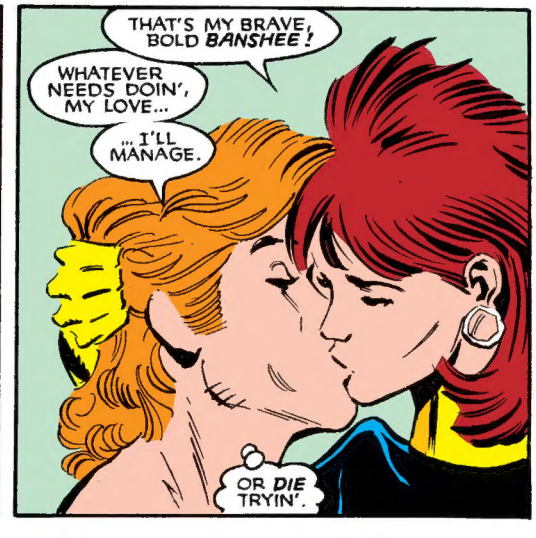

MUIR ISLE...
HE WILL LIVE, DOCTOR.
BRING HIM BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS, HEALER.
IS THAT WISE, MOIRA?
IT'S NECESSARY.
AND WITH REST, THRIVE.

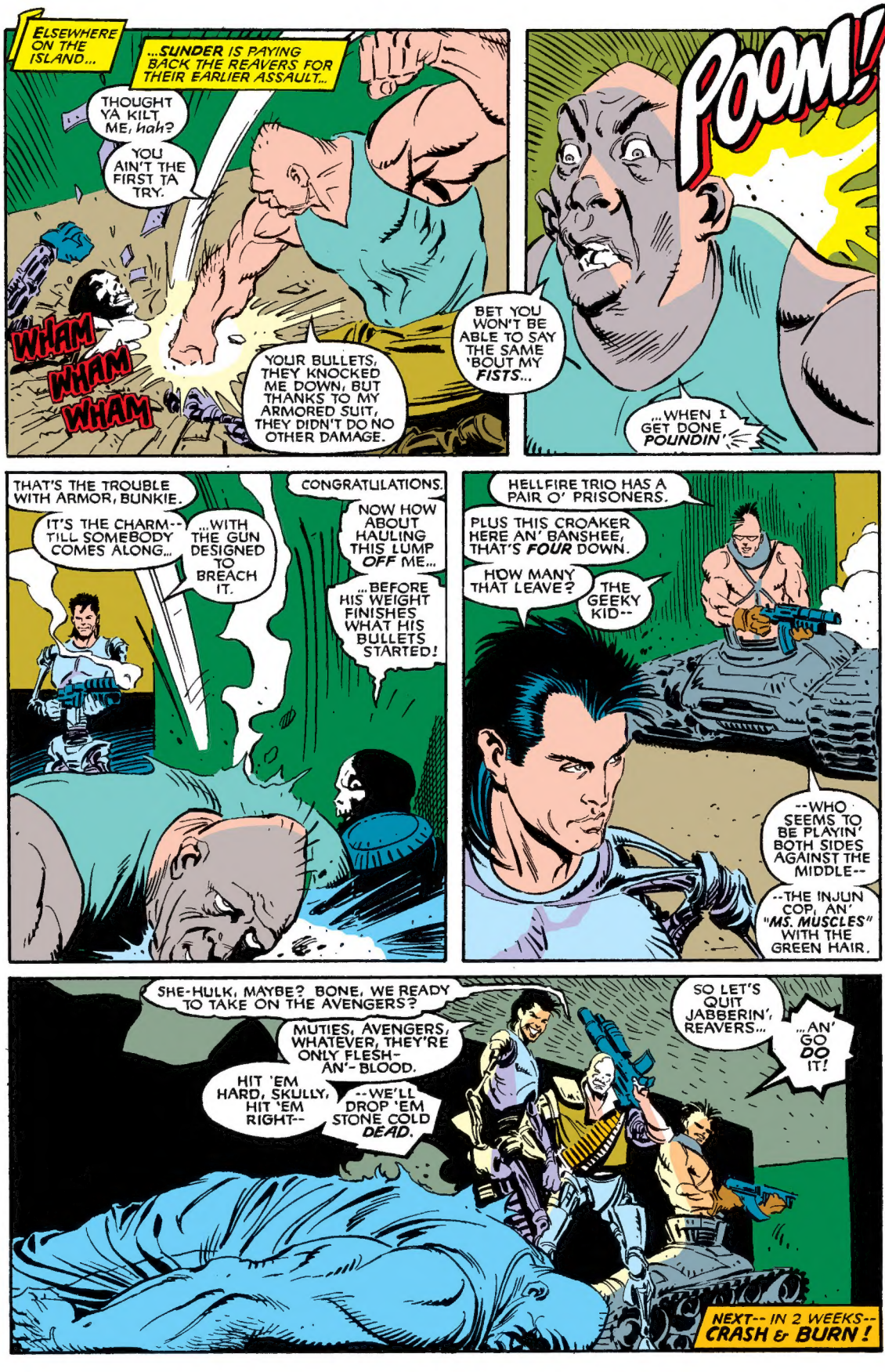
AM I... DREAM'N'?
MOIRA... YE LOOK SO...
THE DEVIL TAKE MY APPEARANCE, SEAN.
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK. BANSHEE'S SONIC SCREAM IS DESPERATELY NEEDED.


MOIRA, YOU CAN'T!
THAT WAS A MORTAL WOUND! EVEN THE HEALER'S POWER HAS LIMITS, PUSH SEAN BEFORE HE'S READY AND YOU'LL LIKELY KILL HIM!
WAIT TILL THEN, SHARON, AND--FROM THE SOUND OF THINGS OUTSIDE--
--IT'S WE WHO'LL BE DEAD.

IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?!
BEG PARDON, LADIES...
...BUT DON'T I HAVE ANY SAY?
MOIRA'S SO... CHANGED!


INSIDE AS WELL AS OUT.
AS THOUGH ALL THE WILD, WARRIOR--HIGHLANDER--PARTS OF HER NATURE HAVE SUDDENLY PUSHED TO THE FORE...
...OVERWHELMING HER GENTLER SIDE.
IF I CAN HELP, ACCUSHLA, I WILL.


THAT'S MY BRAVE, BOLD BANSHEE!
WHATEVER NEEDS DOIN', MY LOVE...
... I'LL MANAGE.
OR DIE TRYIN'.


ELSEWHERE ON THE ISLAND...
...SUNDER IS PAYING BACK THE REAVERS FOR THEIR EARLIER ASSAULT...
THOUGHT YA KILT ME, hah?
YOU AIN'T THE FIRST TA TRY.
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
YOUR BULLETS, THEY KNOCKED ME DOWN, BUT THANKS TO MY ARMORED SUIT, THEY DIDN'T DO NO OTHER DAMAGE.
POOM!
BET YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SAY THE SAME 'BOUT MY FISTS...
...WHEN I GET DONE POUNDIN'.
THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH ARMOR, BUNKIE.
IT'S THE CHARM-- TILL SOMEBODY COMES ALONG...
...WITH THE GUN DESIGNED TO BREACH IT.
CONGRATULATIONS.
NOW HOW ABOUT HAULING THIS LUMP OFF ME...
...BEFORE HIS WEIGHT FINISHES WHAT HIS BULLETS STARTED!
HELLFIRE TRIO HAS A PAIR O' PRISONERS.
PLUS THIS CROAKER HERE AN' BANSHEE, THAT'S FOUR DOWN.
HOW MANY THAT LEAVE?
THE GEEKY KID--
--WHO SEEMS TO BE PLAYIN' BOTH SIDES AGAINST THE MIDDLE--
--THE INJUN COP, AN' "MS. MUSCLES" WITH THE GREEN HAIR.
SHE-HULK, MAYBE? BONE, WE READY TO TAKE ON THE AVENGERS?
MUTIES, AVENGERS, WHATEVER, THEY'RE ONLY FLESH-AN'-BLOOD.
HIT 'EM HARD, SKULLY, HIT 'EM RIGHT--
--WE'LL DROP 'EM STONE COLD DEAD.
SO LET'S QUIT JABBERIN', REAVERS...
...AN' GO DO IT!
NEXT-- IN 2 WEEKS-- CRASH & BURN!

MINUTEMEN
Bluntman